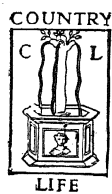


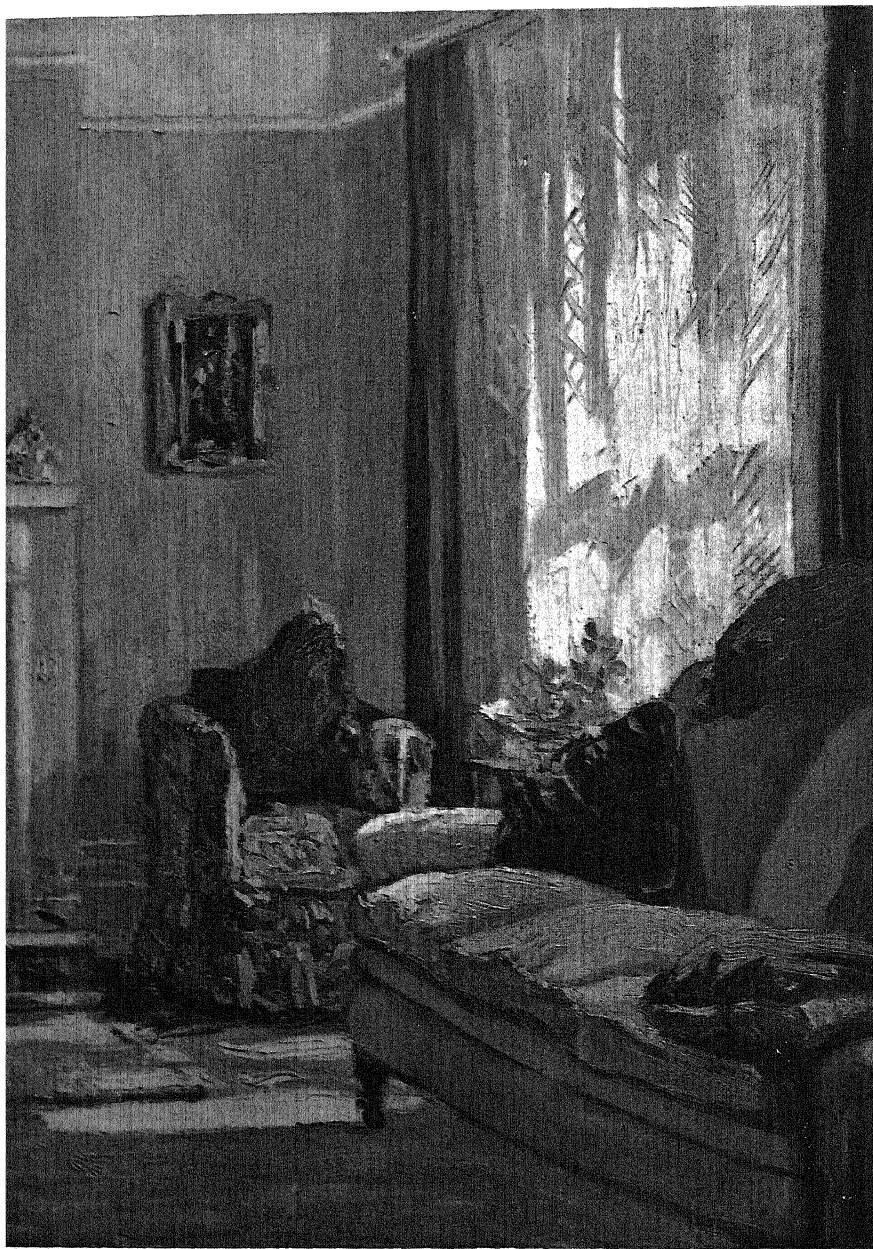
FURNISHING
THE HOUSE

R. Randal Phillips
and
Ellen Woolrich

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First published in 1921.



A CORNER OF A LIVING-ROOM

From a painting by Miss M. E. Atkins

FURNISHING THE HOUSE

BY

R. RANDAL PHILLIPS

AND

ELLEN WOOLRICH

EDITORS OF "OUR HOMES AND GARDENS"

L O N D O N

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PREFACE

THERE are few things about which all people agree—just elemental matters and facts that brook no dispute. The moment one has passed these, a world of difference reveals itself. And in nothing is this more marked than in matters of design and art. Here we are on shifting ground. What is approved to-day may be discounted to-morrow, or *vice versa*; as shown, for example, in the case of Georgian furniture. People living in the 'fifties regarded it as of little merit, preferring furniture of a more "up-to-date" character. But now the outlook is very different, and the country is ransacked for pieces of the eighteenth century. All of which leads us to see that it is hazardous to be dogmatic about house-furnishing. At the same time, to compass everybody's view will result in mere generalities, if not in futility. In this book, therefore, we have endeavoured to avoid both extremes, while stating some definite conclusions and suggestions; our particular aim being to show how the house of moderate size can be furnished with greatest satisfaction. Inevitably contentious points arise. Without a doubt each reader will, in some particular or other, differ from what is here said—personal tastes and predilections, so various and so divergent, being sure to express themselves. But that is all to the good, and makes for vitality. It is felt, however, that the range of examples presented is sufficiently comprehensive to embrace most people's desires. Rooms furnished with old oak furniture are shown as well as those with Regency pieces, and equally the productions of our own day find a place. And here let it be noted that in some cases, while the general scheme is commendable, there may be features that call for criticism; and they have value on that very account, for in house-furnishing there is as much to be learnt from arrangements that are not wholly successful as from those which fully satisfy.

Both as regards matter and illustrations the pages of "Our Homes and Gardens" have been largely drawn upon, and we desire here to make acknowledgment to the several contributors for those portions of their articles that have been incorporated in

Preface

the following pages. No individual mention is, however, possible, since the matter has been so extensively edited—condensed and altered in some parts, supplemented in others—in order to bring the whole harmoniously together.

The result is, we hope, a little book that may be of service to all who have an interest in furnishing, and who desire especially that their house shall be a home, its rooms embellished appropriately, and possessing above all that lived-in appearance which is the evidence of reality.



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FURNISHING THE HOUSE

INTRODUCTION

VERY few people have the means and the opportunity to furnish their house at once complete; it has generally to be done gradually, pieces being collected as the years go by; and there is a great fascination in thus making a home. Essential to success, however, is general unity and good relationship, not only as regards individual pieces, but more particularly as between one room and another. The whole house should have the same character.

The greatest mischief results from essaying a sort of make-believe in our homes, surrounding ourselves with all sorts of things that do not belong to us, and so producing a totally artificial effect.

We flatter ourselves on having made a great advance as compared with our granddams. With a sense of satisfaction we point to our modern appreciation of Sheraton and Hepplewhite furniture, our reproductions of Jacobean hangings and Adam mantelpieces; and from our high level of good taste we look back with superiority on the age which revelled in ponderous mahogany sideboards; flowers, fruit and birds under glass domes; foot-stools of Berlin wool, antimacassars, and a very green carpet with lilies peacefully intertwining themselves on its surface. But, though no doubt our general taste in house embellishment has vastly improved, we have yet a long way to go, and the legacy of the immediate past is not by any means wiped out.

What we really want to get is a thoroughly sound, genuine outlook. We want to consider our rooms not as furniture repositories in miniature, not as home museums, but places which really belong to ourselves and our own time. We need to get rid of the superfluous pieces; the chairs that are never

used, the occasional tables with not even so much demand on their services as their name implies; the scores of miscellaneous ornaments which possess no decorative value when seen at a distance and have no quality of craftsmanship when examined close at hand.

In domestic furnishing the word "comfort" does not mean only bodily comfort, but mental as well, and it is for this mental comfort that you are careful, according to your appreciation of form and colour, to arrange all things so that they shall make together a harmonious whole.

But you cannot be comfortable in a stiffly interpreted "old oak" dining-room or Sheraton drawing-room—least of all in a hard version of the modern "cottage" living-room. They represent too proper a protest against the lax in life. They are too much like school and too little like home. To make them endurable you must introduce—whatever the stylist may say—the little incongruities which to you mean comfort. Such things, however, should be allowed in your home only because you personally like them, not because you have observed that someone else has them, for this is the worst form of plagiarism, entirely destructive of all individuality.

To illustrate the point with a definite example. It is suggested that your living-room contains oak furniture of the kind that was made and used in the middle of the seventeenth century, before the coming of Dutch William interfered with native style. You will have an oak chest, a settle, possibly a bureau, four or six tall-backed chairs, a "gate-leg" table, and so on. The furniture is well known and fairly easily obtained. Now, if you are to be strictly true to style, you will have no easy chair in the room, for there were no easy chairs until quite at the close of the seventeenth century, and even then the few which appeared were not "easy" chairs as we understand them, but upholstered arm-chairs. Easy chairs do not belong to the age of oak in which your living-room is furnished. But for your own personal comfort a low leather-covered chair—quite incongruous—is a necessity. Then you will be absolutely right in having one, for it is not your purpose to teach a lesson in period to visitors, who are to be shown round as at a museum; you seek your own and

your family's comfort. Moreover, it is only in the selection of homely things, as distinct from stylish things—*i.e.*, things in the manner of a particular style—that you can show your personal taste. After all, in selecting Sheraton furniture for a Sheraton room you are merely reflecting Sheraton's taste. But it is in the power to express your own individuality that the danger lies. You are instantly out of leading strings when you set out to buy something you like to go with something at home which you know is correct. If you have no appreciation for what is appropriate you will inevitably show it in your selection, or, what is worse, have something thrust upon you by the salesman, who may, indeed, know a lot about style and fixtures, but, of course, be in ignorance of your own home, having never seen it.

The best thing to do is to avoid generally anything which strikes you as elaborate, large, prominent, self-assertive. If a piece of furniture, or a pattern on carpet or curtain, stands out in a showroom, you may be quite certain that it will stand out more in your own house. And your little incongruities must not stand out. You may allow them to be there for comfort and the sake of homeliness; but they must "keep their place," or good-bye to harmony.

There are hosts of things which may quite legitimately find place in our homes, merely because they interest us. China attracts many people, prints and engravings others, while the vast majority, it is to be feared, are not definitely interested in any one form of decorative expression, but have an almost incurable passion for "ornaments." The immense output of Japan alone in the way of what one must regard as perfectly useless ornaments is a very significant commentary upon the widespread desire to become possessed of futilities. Yet the very fact that this desire is so universal seems to suggest that it is fundamental and sincere. It is not, therefore, that the buying of ornaments is in itself an artistic sin, but that this buying is done without discrimination. That is the cause of so many homes becoming full of rubbish. A good maxim to remember is that ornaments decrease in value as they increase in number. You may find that your drawing-room mantelshelf looks bare (and, by the way, the question, "What is a mantel-

shelf for ?" is not so easy to answer) and decide to buy vases, figures, curios, and so on to complete it. There is no reason why you should not go to a shop and purchase articles which interest you, quite apart from their utility. But be sure first of all that they do really interest you, and, second, that they are bought sparingly and are good of their kind.

The homeliness of the home is that quality which suggests that civilised and refined people live in it, and it is brought about very largely by the things they bring into it—possibly more by things habitually used. The fireside easy chair is the homeliest object in the home because it is used most and shows it. But everything which has the appearance of being constantly handled or looked at in the home helps to express that lived-in appearance which is so superior to evidence of style, and is fortunately to be obtained by all, independent either of the size of the home or the depth of the purse.

Chapter I

THE HALL

SEEING that one's first impressions of the furnishing of a house are given at once upon entering, it is important on this account, if on no other, to bestow careful attention upon the hall.

If it be only a passage, treat it as such, and do not fill up its already restricted space with furniture designed for a more roomy entrance. Who does not know the house where the front door opens into a passage 4 or 5 feet wide, and the maid has to flatten herself against the wall in order to admit the visitor and shut the door after him?

In a hall, however small, it is of course necessary to have some article of furniture on which letters, cards, gloves, etc., may be put, and, in the absence of a place appointed for the purpose, there



WELL SUITED TO A NARROW HALL.

A small Jacobean table with clock and candlesticks, and a piece of an old Kelim rug as a background.

must also be some accommodation for hats, coats, and umbrellas. The problem of the entrance passage is really not easy of solution unless the householder is very stern with himself (or herself) in the matter of discarding superfluities.

The best method of treating it is, in a sense, not to furnish it at all. A table is not essential if we substitute for it a simple flap-shelf, not more than 15 or 18 inches wide, which can be let down against the wall on occasions, as when luggage is



A SIMPLE TREATMENT OF A PANELLED ENTRANCE HALL.

The panelling is finished a broken white, the window curtains are cornflower blue, the carpeting grey.



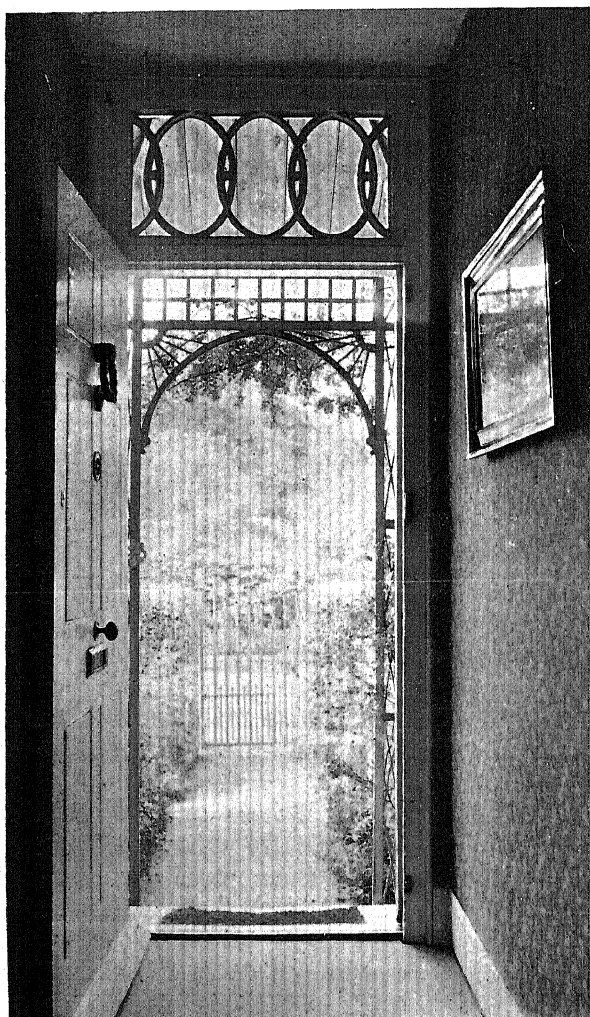
IN A LATE GEORGIAN HOUSE.

Showing that pictures can be suitably used where space allows.

being carried in or out. Such a shelf, with moulded edges and rounded corners, looks well in oak or mahogany, or painted to match the rest of the woodwork.

The question as to what to do with hats and coats next presents itself. It has long been a mystery why the average British home appears to be considered incomplete without one of those monstrosities known as a "hall-stand," somewhere near the front door. The device referred to is, of course, the one having hat and coat pegs across the top and down the sides. It generally has a mirror in the back, which is useless when concealed behind an overcoat, and there is nearly always a small drawer in the centre, with umbrella receptacles on either side.

Occasionally strong-minded people have revolted, and to meet the demand for something more appropriate the hall-cupboard



THE ENTRY TO A VERY NARROW HALL.

With graceful over-door light and trellis porch. White door with black knocker, knob, etc. Walls papered with a small all-over pattern.

or wardrobe has come into being, or antique pieces have been used for the purpose. In a hall which is large enough to accommodate it, the hat and coat problem could not be more happily solved than by a free-standing cupboard containing a shelf for hats and several hooks for coats. However, if both space and expense are of primary importance, then the simplest and best solution of the difficulty is to have a plain moulded oak, mahogany, or painted batten on the wall with a few good oxydised hat and coat hooks screwed to it. And most housewives will agree that the fewer the hooks for our visitors' use the better, otherwise the spare over-

coats, raincoats, and hats of the family are apt to remain in the hall for unlimited periods.

Having eliminated the hall-stand from the scheme of things, one has perforce to suggest a substitute for it as a receptacle for sticks and umbrellas. If the ideal umbrella stand exists, it is a close-kept secret. Most of them have a common fault in



A SMALL HALL, YET ROOMY ENOUGH TO ALLOW AN OLD HARPSICHORD TO BE USED IN THE FURNISHING.

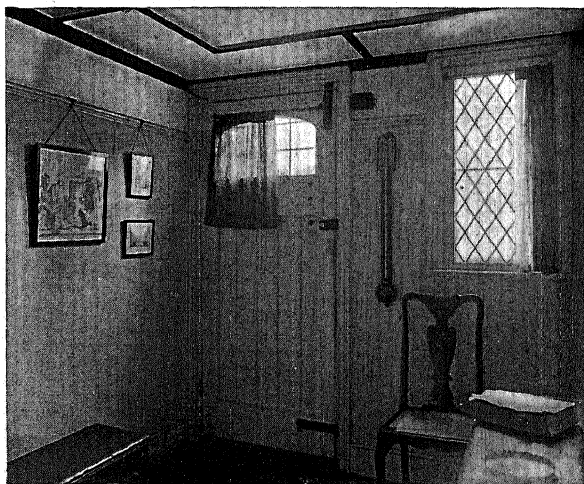
the ease with which one umbrella can be torn by the ferrule of another getting inside it.

Racks on which sticks rest horizontally across two hooks or pegs are right enough, but obviously are useless for wet umbrellas.

For the narrow passage-hall, clip holders fastened to the wall offer perhaps the best solution of an awkward problem. They have little troughs to take the drippings, are neat and unobtrusive, and no damage can be done to any umbrella in them.



DISCLOSING A PLEASANT VISTA.



MAKING THE MOST OF A CRAMPED SPACE.

With regard to floor coverings, if our hall should happen to be laid with wood blocks or oak in narrow lengths, a good rug or two (with a piece of corrugated rubber sewn on the underside of each corner to prevent slipping) will meet the case admirably. But more often we find plain boarding.

This, if in a presentable condition, can be stained and polished, and rugs used upon it; or the whole floor may be overlaid with linoleum or cork carpet of a plain colour. Effective, too, are large black and white squares.



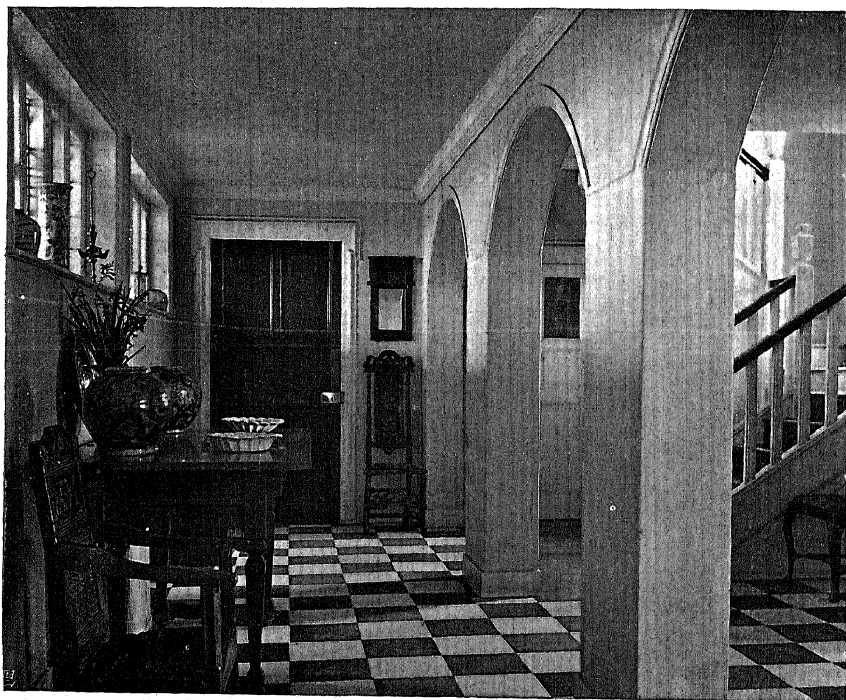
A VESTIBULE FORMED IN A NARROW HALL.

This arrangement gives seclusion to the entry and overcomes the tunnel effect of a long, narrow passage-way.

Sometimes one sees tiled floors in halls and ground-floor passages, but these are not much in favour. However, they have their particular merit in a country house where there is traffic from the garden, as the tile surface does not absorb the dirt.

Taking everything into consideration, the best material with which to cover not only halls and passages, but many other floors as well, is good thick plain cork carpet or linoleum.

Cork carpet is obtainable in three or four thicknesses and in several shades. For general purposes the plain dark brown is best, as it accords well with all kinds of woodwork, and acquires a pleasant tone with polish and time. It also forms an excellent background for rugs, as, too, does a certain dark slate colour in which it is obtainable, and a dark green.



A SMALL HALL WITH AN AIR OF SPACIOUSNESS.

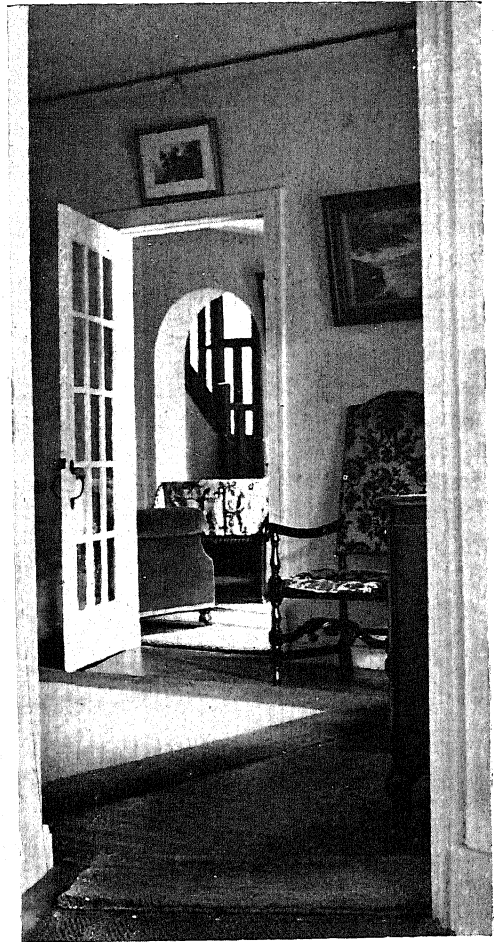
Note the striking effect of plain wall surfaces in conjunction with black and white marble squares on the floor.

The best treatment for cork carpet when laid is not to wash it too frequently, but to keep it polished. Washing gives it a dry "powdery" appearance, besides depriving it of that depth of tone which only polishing can give.

Concerning wall decoration, in small houses the treatment adopted for the hall must to a large extent depend on that of the staircase, because in so many houses the stairs come straight down into the hall or passage. Frequently it is far the best thing to use a plain buff, deep cream or primrose colour on the wall.

An important factor in the question is light. Many halls, in flats especially, are lighted only by fanlights over the front door and over other doors which open into them. Frequently the light is supplemented by side-lights to the front door, and by what filters down the stairs from the window of a half-landing. In such a case it is a good plan to paint all the woodwork white—not a cold blue-white, but a pleasant warm tint, like milk.

A word about lighting fittings may be added. The usual "hall lamp" is either a mean thing or pretentiously elaborate. What is needed is a fitting possessing character, fashioned on simple and formal lines.

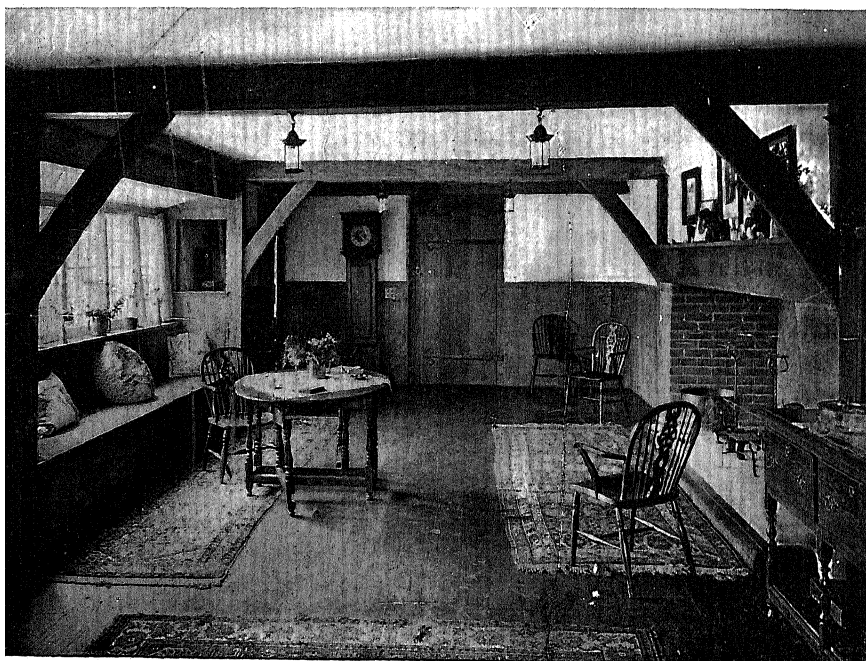


A GLIMPSE FROM AN ENTRANCE LOBBY.

THE FURNISHED HALL

The hall as a passage space is what one finds in most houses, but sometimes it is on a more ample scale, becoming what is known as a lounge or furnished hall: and even in a house where such a hall is not existing it is possible to contrive it with a little reconstruction and the absorption of what might otherwise be a useless room. In a new house a hall of this kind is generally desired to be included, with a well-designed fireplace as its main feature. No longer a passage-way, the hall thus becomes a sitting-place, a place where the household can gather in a free-and-easy way, where on occasion tea can be taken; a place also in which to receive or speed one's guests.

In view of this, its furnishing and decoration require to be considered as in the case of a sitting-room, always bearing



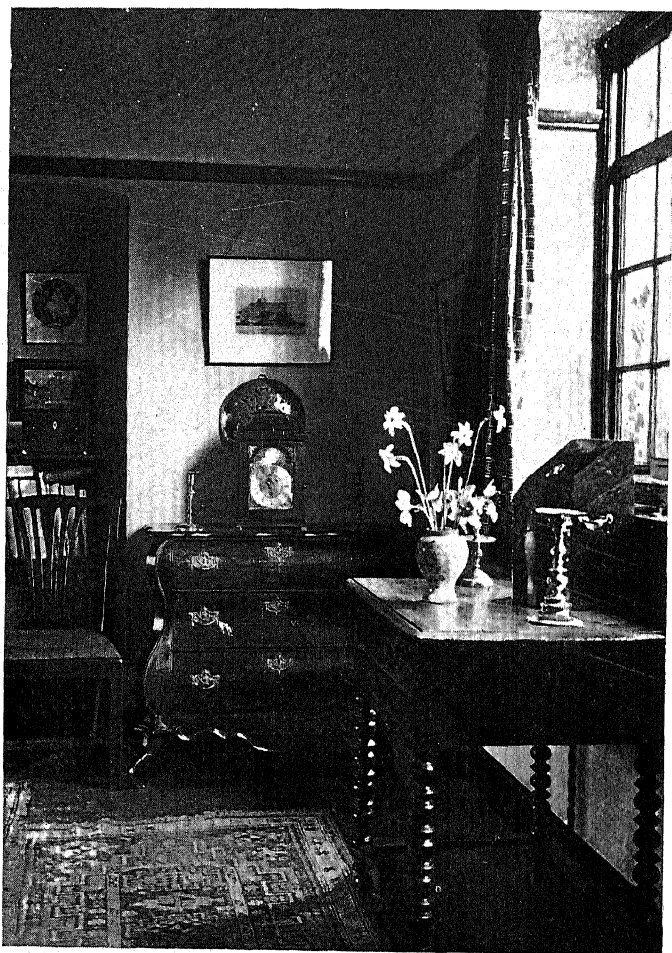
THE HALL AS A HOUSE-PLACE.



AN INVITING ARRANGEMENT IN A FURNISHED HALL.

This hall was contrived by absorbing a small room adjoining the entrance. The walls are parchment colour; yellow predominates in the furnishing, and a strong note of this colour is given by the beautiful china on the mantelshelf; an old hunting print serenely occupying the space above.

in mind that the hall is still a communicating place and must not be overcrowded. It is essentially a place where only such things as are needed should be put. Lounge chairs, for example, are exactly the sort of chairs that suit such a hall, and as they are likely to be much used it is very necessary to consider what they are to be covered with. Leather-covered chairs are admirable here for everyday use.



WITH PIECES OF DIFFERENT PERIODS EFFECTIVELY ASSEMBLED.

The fireplace treatment should be simple, and there is no reason for it to lose dignity thereby. All too frequently the fireplace is made over-elaborate. If there is a shelf, two or three good ornaments will be ample, and quite out of place in this situation are photographs and miscellaneous things of a personal kind.

As regards the floor—whether of wood stained or painted, parquet, or tiles—nothing looks better than a few rugs, which,



A HAPPY GROUPING, BOTH USEFUL AND DECORATIVE.

besides being so satisfactory in appearance, possess the merit of being eminently serviceable, inasmuch as they can be taken up and readily cleaned. The hall necessarily has a great deal of traffic through it, and it is essential to treat its floor in a way that renders cleaning easy.

Colour is all-important in the wall treatment, whether the walls are distempered, papered, or painted. The colour should be of a welcoming tone, but in no degree aggressive. The actual colour will be determined by the conditions of each case—in particular, its aspect and whether the hall is well lighted or poorly lighted. Into a hall facing north or east a sunlight effect can be introduced by some tone of yellow.

Also to be borne in mind is the effect of the colour scheme in the hall in relation to that of the rooms which open out of it. The hall must rather lead up to the other rooms than have a detached character of its own. Often nothing looks better than a warm cream or a good brown-paper brown.

There must also be provision to counteract the common tendency to leave hats and coats lying about, but this is a matter that presents no great difficulty, for in a hall treated as a room there is an opportunity to have a piece of furniture of the wardrobe or cupboard type; and this will serve all needs admirably.

Chapter II

THE STAIRCASE

STAIRCASE and hall are, to a great extent, interdependent, though unfortunately they present conflicting claims upon our decorative ingenuity.

A staircase wall offers a large surface whereon a bold scheme of decoration may be attempted. It is one of the few places where a wallpaper of large pattern can be indulged in, whereas the exact opposite is the case with the narrow passage type of hall, where the lack of width is emphasised by anything in the nature of a large pattern on the walls. How to reconcile these opposing features is a problem difficult of solution and one that has managed to spoil many an otherwise good decorative scheme.

If there is absolutely no structural item, such as an archway, separating the entrance hall from the foot of the stairs, a simple way of making a break is to



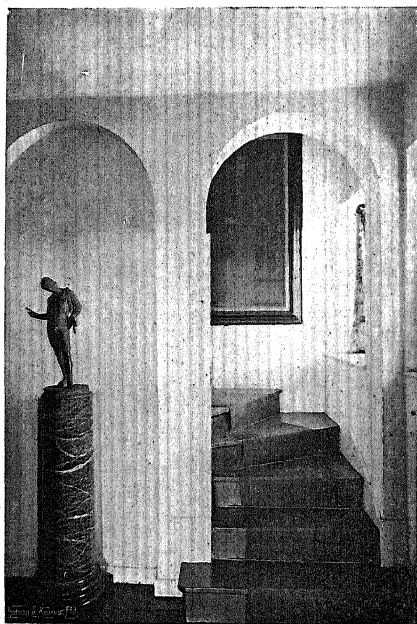
A WHITE PAINTED STAIRCASE AND DADO.
With plain string-coloured carpet and black stair rods.

have two fluted wooden pilasters fixed to the wall, one on either side of the passage just before it enters the domain of the staircase. Painted, or stained, to match the rest of the woodwork, these simple additions to the passage-way define its limit, so to speak, and give a *raison d'être* for varying the decorative treatment between it and the staircase proper.

It is not suggested that two patterned wallpapers could be placed so close together as to be separated only by the pilasters. On the contrary, pattern ought to be avoided altogether in the narrow hall.

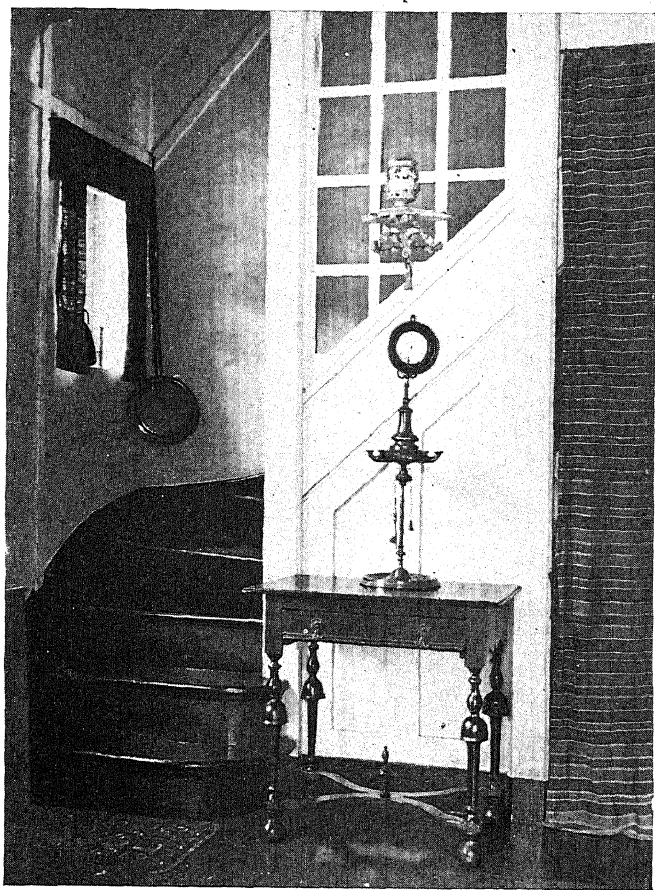
On a staircase wall reproductions of old-fashioned "chintz" or Chinese designs look well in a small house.

As to carpeting, the stairs in every house get a great deal of wear, which makes it foolish economy to lay down any but a very good quality carpet. A string-coloured hair carpet is admirable on a stairs, as it wears well and does not show marks prominently. Thick felt pads should be placed under the carpet on each tread, and the carpet should be a yard or so longer than is actually required in order to permit of its being moved up or down once or twice a year to equalise the wear.



THE FOOT OF A SMALL STAIRCASE
CUNNINGLY CONTRIVED.

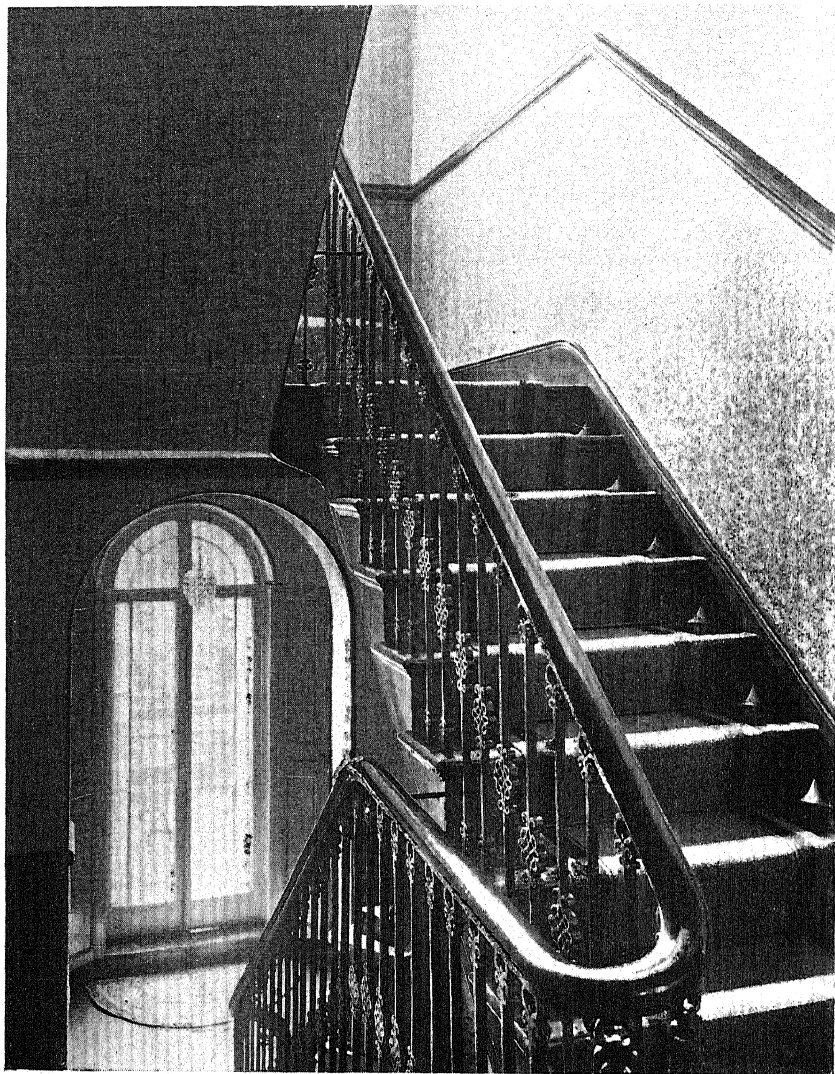
Modern ideas, gradually eliminating unnecessary labour from our houses, have been brought to bear upon the question of stair rods. For years the great British "brass" fetish had things all its own way with stair rods, the cleaning of which outside our bedroom doors in the early morning used to evoke groans. Now, however, our choice is extended, and rods of oxydised



A PLAIN OAK STAIRS LEFT UNCARPETED.

brass, copper or steel, which do not require cleaning, may be obtained. Or one may have oak or teak rods, angled to fit the stairs. One has to note also the recent device which takes the place of the customary stair-eyes, the raising of a little lever catch at either end at once releasing the rod, and enabling it as easily to be put back again in position.

Where stairs are painted, the colour adopted is of importance. White is generally in favour for treads, risers and balusters, but



A STAIRCASE WITH AN IRON BALUSTRADE.

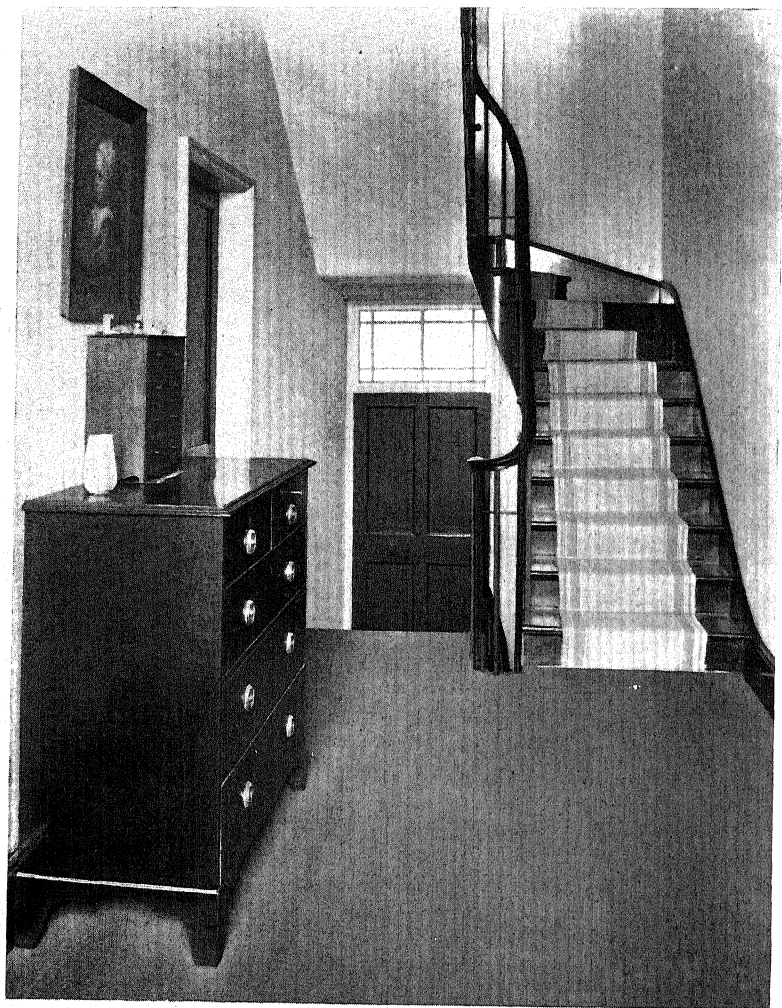
The ironwork is black and the treads are treated with painted marbling on black. There existed a dado of embossed paper, which has been painted over and heavily stippled in sea-green.



AN OLD STAIRCASE WITH PLEASANT VISTA OF THE LANDING.

The woodwork is painted a broken white and the stairs have a string-coloured hair carpet with black border. The photograph unfortunately makes the ascent here appear to be steep; but, in reality, it is of very easy gradient.

latterly there has been a growing appreciation of the value of black, both as regards its decorative quality and its serviceability. Or black and white may be combined. For instance, black treads on a white staircase are very effective.



A LANDING AND STAIRCASE LAID WITH A STRING MATTING.

The woodwork of the staircase is painted black—an effective treatment.

Chapter III

THE DINING-ROOM

THE ideal dining-room is an apartment used for meals only and furnished accordingly, but in many small houses and flats with the accommodation limited to two reception-rooms the dining-room has to adapt itself to circumstances and serve as a study or second sitting-room as well as fulfilling its own proper functions. The furnishing and decorating of such a room is a little more difficult than that of the dining-room proper, and if the householder has a third room at his disposal, it is better to reserve one of them—even the smallest, so long as it is not too small to make the service comfortable—exclusively for meals, rather than to spoil an otherwise good-sized sitting-room by the inclusion of a dining-table, so endowing it with a dual character.

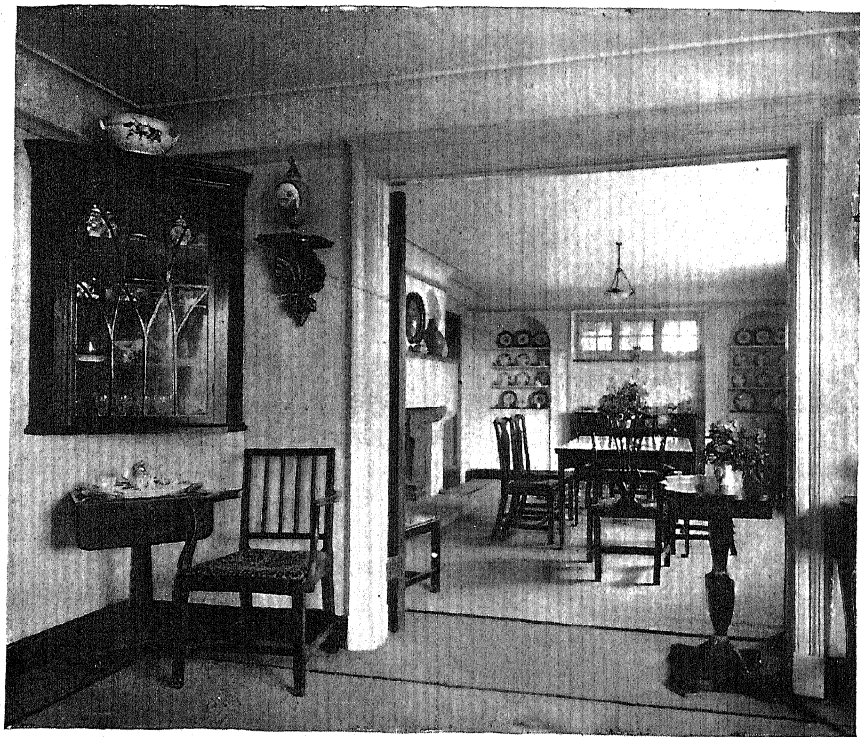
At one time the great majority of British householders appeared to be imbued with the “somber tastes” of Mr. Salteena’s host, it being almost a fixed idea that the dining-room should be papered in dark red. But it is somewhat of a relief to notice that this tradition is dying out more or less rapidly. It is by no means convincing, however, that the dark green or blue walls one sometimes sees in its stead are much of an improvement.

As to colour, the aspect of the room is the first consideration. This is one of the things that the experienced eye never loses sight of, yet it is one which the untrained eye nearly always ignores, sometimes with disastrous results. We never get so much sun in this country that we can afford to treat even a room facing south-west with nothing but cold blues, greens and greys.

For a dining-room the best aspect is east or south-east, because the sun at breakfast time is always welcome, whereas towards evening the rays of the setting sun are not required on the dinner table. It is not always possible, however, to choose the aspect for ourselves—arbitrary circumstances are apt to

decide for us ; but we can at least know beforehand the decorative difficulties we have to face.

The tradition of the "red" dining-room, to which reference has already been made, is no doubt based on the fact that the greatest concentration of light at night should fall on to the dinner table, leaving the rest of the room more or less in shadow, except for a shaded light over the sideboard. This result must have been admirably achieved in the old days when wax candles were the illuminant and rooms were large and lofty, but in these days of electric light it seems absurd to cover our walls with a dark paper that absorbs anything from 30 to 80 per cent. of the light that falls upon it. We can easily regulate the amount of



IN A SUSSEX HOUSE: LOOKING INTO THE DINING-ROOM.

Light and airy, and free from the stuffy conventions of yesterday.



A DINING-ROOM IN A LONDON HOUSE.

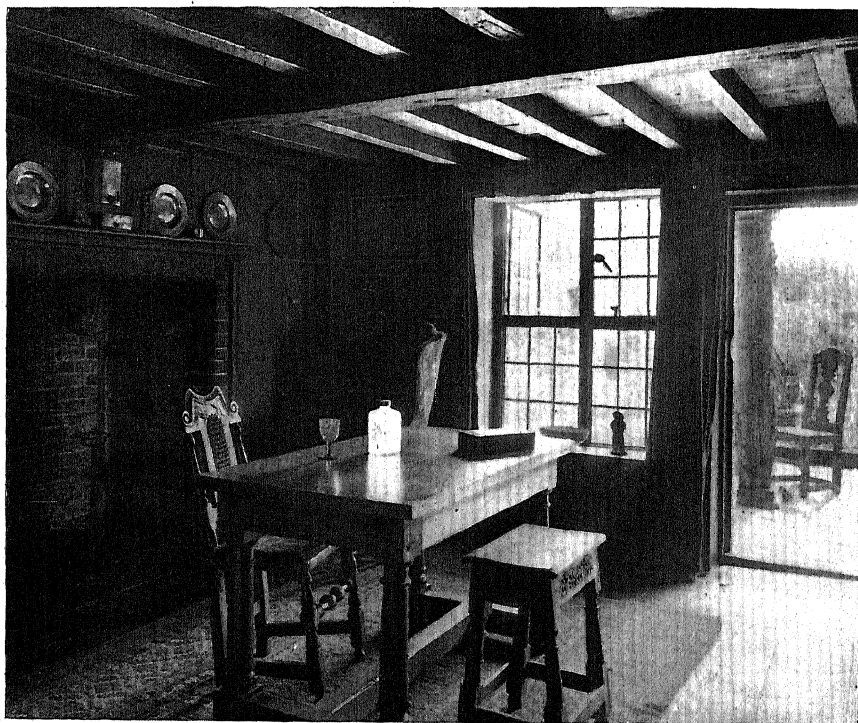
Designed and furnished in an eighteenth-century manner.

light upon our dinner tables at night; therefore, let us get what benefit we can from reflected light by having a suitable wall finish. The careful housewife who chooses dark wallpapers because "they do not show the dirt" pays for her economy in increased lighting bills.

A compromise very often effected with excellent result is to have the dining-room—or any sitting-room, for that matter—panelled to about chair-rail height, with a deep cream or buff paper above. Or if genuine panelling is out of the question, owing to cost, a good substitute is plywood; or a chair rail may be put at dado height.

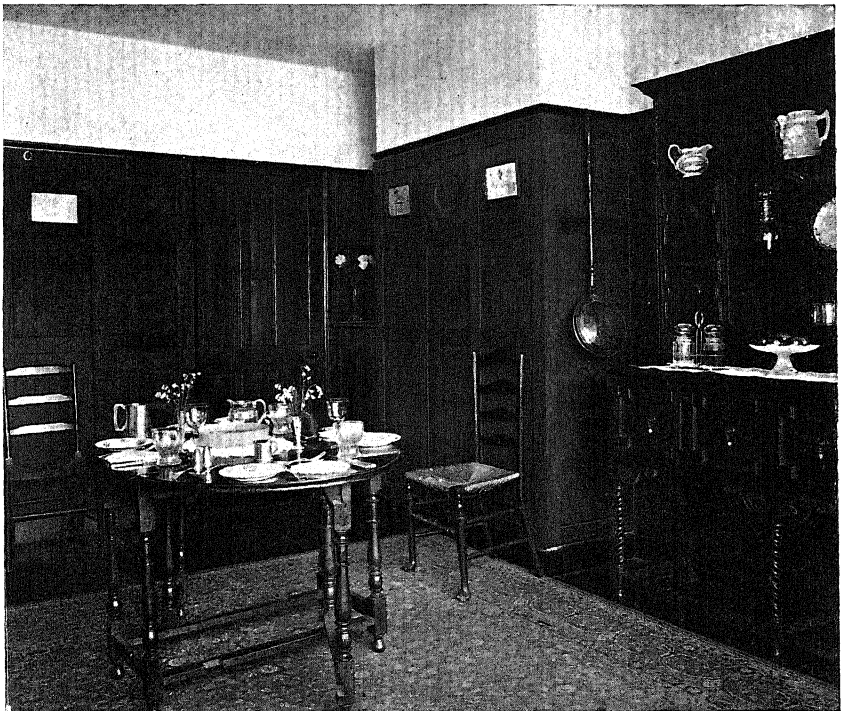
Plain carpets, however pleasant in themselves, should be avoided in any room that is much used, but especially in a dining-room. A carpet is an expensive item of furnishing that is expected to last, and a good Turkey or Persian carpet will last a lifetime. To choose a plain pile, no matter how good the quality, is to court disaster in the form of unavoidable spots, not to mention such tragedies as spilt wine, etc., whereas the patterns on good Oriental carpets, besides being pleasing in their designs and colourings, render the ordinary small accidents of everyday life practically invisible.

It is now possible to get most delightful carpets, either essentially modern in design and colouring, or reproductions of

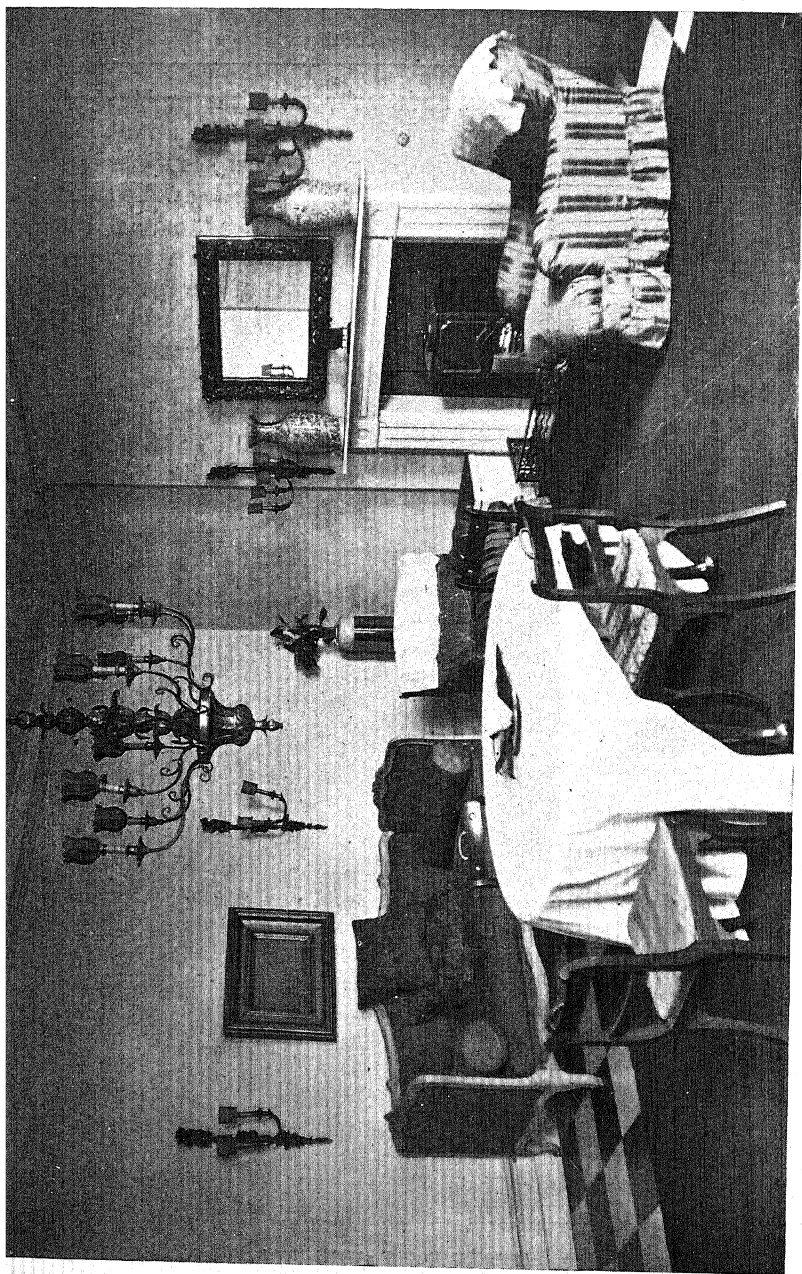


OLD OAK FURNITURE IN KEEPING WITH THE STRUCTURAL CHARACTER
OF THE ROOM.

Oriental carpets, and these satisfactorily solve the problem of furnishing the floor with something durable and beautiful, yet not over-costly. And whilst on the subject of carpets it may be noted that the all too common procedure of selecting wallpapers as the first step towards house-furnishing and then "matching" the carpets and other fabrics to them is a reversal of the proper order of things. The carpet is the foundation of the room, and all other tints and colours in the decorative scheme should key with it, so to speak. Wallpapers are infinite in variety and are meant to last only a few years at the most, whereas a good carpet should be chosen with the utmost care as being a permanent possession. In most cases a neutral tint is far the most pleasant for the walls, which should generally be of a lighter tone than the floor.

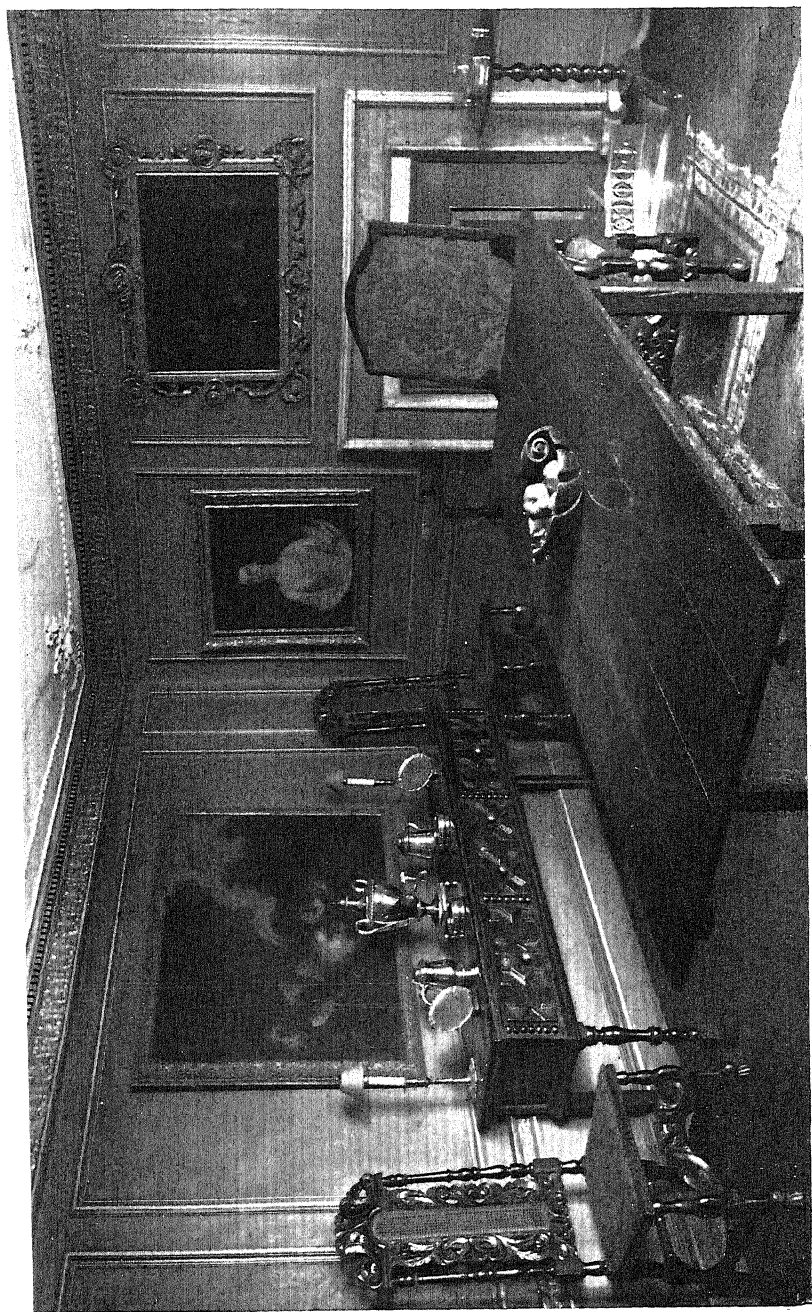


A DINING-ROOM IN A MODERN HOUSE, WITH NEW OAK PANELLING.



AN UNUSUAL AND EFFECTIVE TREATMENT IN A DINING-ROOM THAT FACES NORTH.

The use of fabrics of a pure rich yellow in a white room with black and white floor produces the effect of imprisoned sunshine.

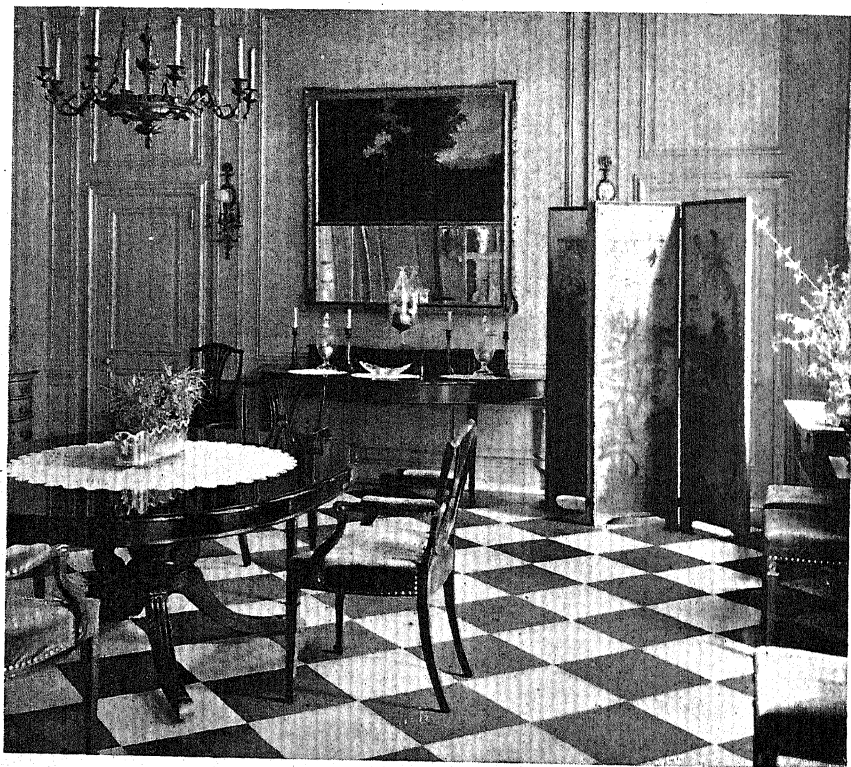


THE DINING-ROOM IN A MAN'S CHAMBERS IN LINCOLN'S INN.
Panelled walls painted a subtle tone of faded apricot, forming a background in complete harmony with the dignified furniture.

One point with regard to a dining-room carpet worth bearing in mind is that a design with a central medallion is often unsuitable, because it is not always possible to lay it in such a position that both the centre of the carpet and the centre of the dining-table are in accord with one another, and unless this is the case with a medallion design the result is a loss of symmetry in the room which is unpleasant to the eye.

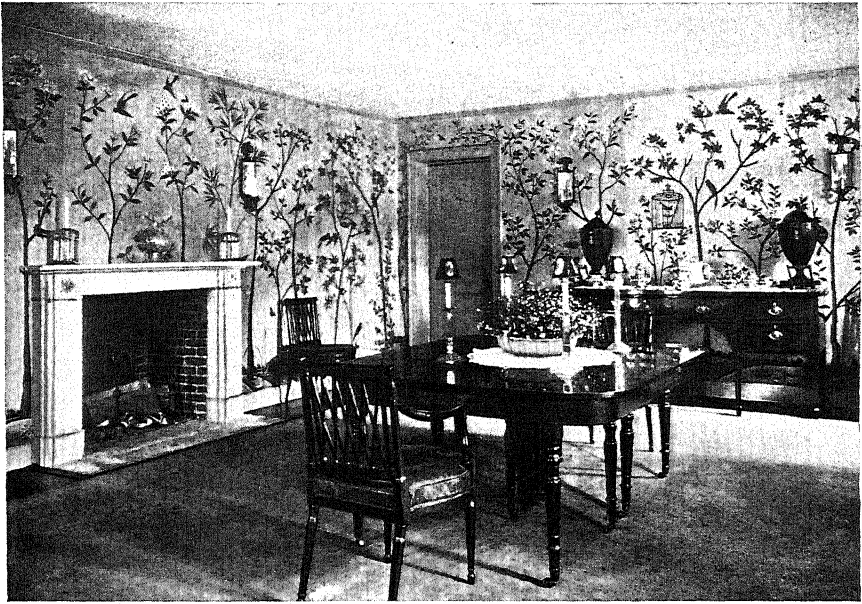
The most important piece of furniture in the dining-room is, of course, the table; and money is always well expended on getting a really good one.

Having got such a table, there seems very little sense in keeping fine wood religiously covered with a coloured cloth by



A LARGE BLACK AND WHITE CHEQUER MAKES A SUCCESSFUL FLOOR
IN A ROOM LIKE THIS.

day and a white one for meals. The usual serge, cloth, or velvet table-cover is seldom lovely, and one is glad to think that it is doomed. It gets dusty and stained: it has to be removed and folded up three times a day and replaced as often, which, when one has a good table, is absurd. The well-kept bare wood is infinitely more beautiful than a few yards of coloured material. Otherwise one might as well have a deal-topped table and do away



REVIVING AN OLD MANNER OF WALL TREATMENT.

With a reproduction of Chinese paper of a free design.

with all the work of polishing. In regard to this latter, much care is usually expended in protecting the surface from hot dishes. But the fault generally lies with the French polish, containing shellac, with which nearly all modern furniture is treated. If, however, the housewife likes to take her courage in both hands, and have the French polish entirely removed, she will have little or no further trouble. Subsequent applications of beeswax and turpentine, or one of the advertised furniture

polishes, plus elbow grease, will in quite a short time give the surface a far nicer tone than the French polish, and there will be no more white marks left by hot plates, assuming that an asbestos mat is put under each d'oley.

Another relic of what may be termed the "stodgy" dining-room that is dying out, in company with the red wallpaper, is the massive sideboard with its superstructure of shelves and mirrors.



REGENCY CHAIRS IN A DINING-ROOM.

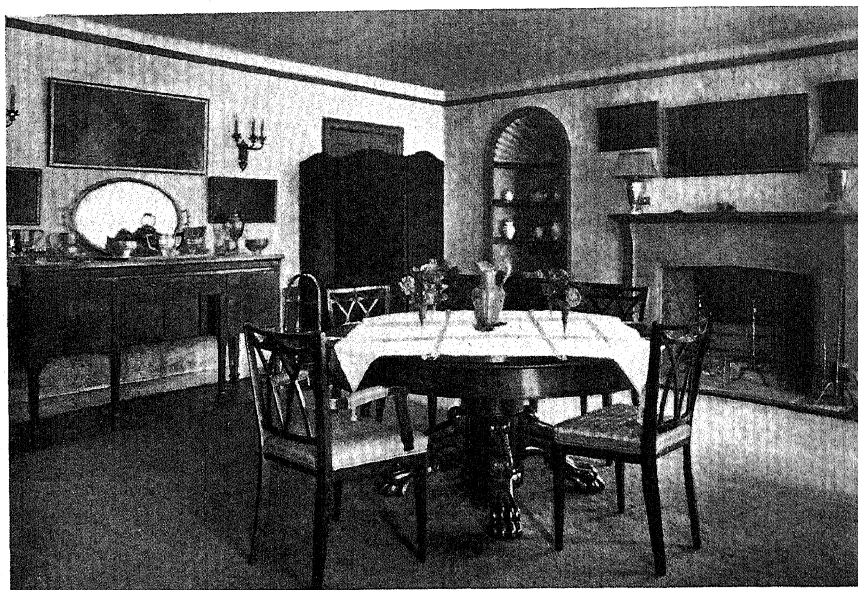
A view showing how amicably they live with furniture of other periods.

Modern ideas are growing more simple. We are reverting to the Golden Age of furniture design for our principal pieces, and this has led to the reproduction, or resurrection, of the Queen Anne and Georgian styles. The possessors of genuine period sideboards, Sheraton or other, should count themselves fortunate. These and their modern successors are usually fitted with quite useful cupboards and drawers, but a simple rail, with



A SMALL DINING-ROOM SIMPLY FURNISHED IN OAK.

With storage cupboard for china, etc., on left of dresser, and service hatch to kitchen on the right, the shelves above being accessible from either side.



A WELL-BALANCED FURNISHING SCHEME, WITH CONVENIENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR SERVICE.

or without a short silk curtain at the back, takes the place of the aforementioned superstructure. A sideboard of Queen Anne or Sheraton type looks just as well—often better—with no rail and hanging, as seen in the illustration above.

Chairs present no difficulty. Designers of to-day have produced some excellent models, or reproductions can be obtained to accord with any sideboard one may possess. Not that there is any need to advocate "period" furnishing. Nevertheless, one should not place carved oak chairs with a Sheraton sideboard, or a Welsh dresser in association with Chippendale chairs.

Furnishing a dining-room in oak presents somewhat greater difficulties than the use of the more sophisticated mahogany or walnut. With oak we are going further back into the history of furniture and its evolution, when austerity rather than comfort was the keynote, and solid utility rather than elegance of line. The oak gate-leg table may look very appropriate in conjunction with straight-backed rush-seated chairs and a dresser type of

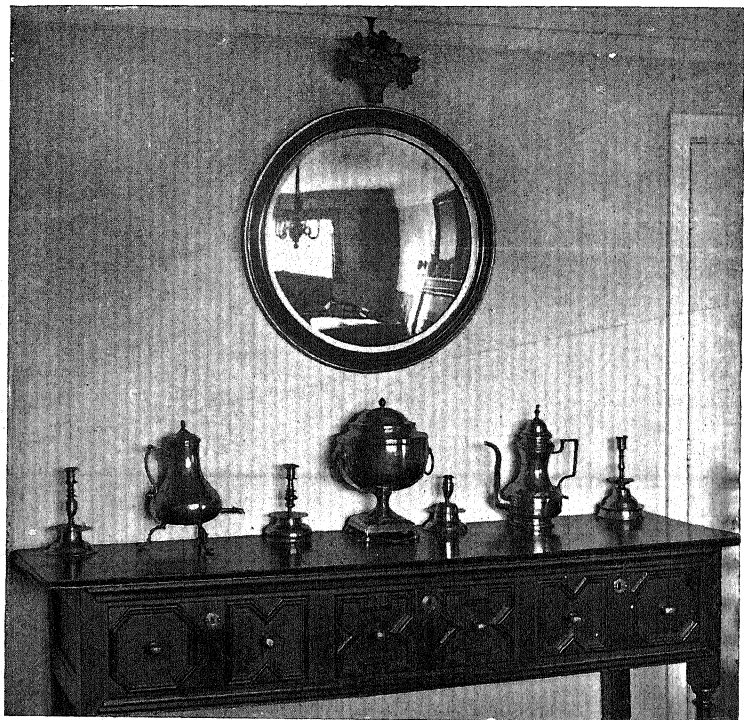
sideboard, but it is idle to pretend that the diner finds it easy to dodge the legs of it.

As for the ingle-nook fitted with uncompromising oaken settles which one sees pictured in "artistic homes," this as a feature in a modern house is wholly incongruous. Admittedly it is a very popular feature, but, being part of a fictitious manner of furnishing, it will be condemned by anyone who has a proper sense of values.



AN OLD OAK COURT CUPBOARD STILL RENDERING SERVICE IN A
MODERN DINING-ROOM.

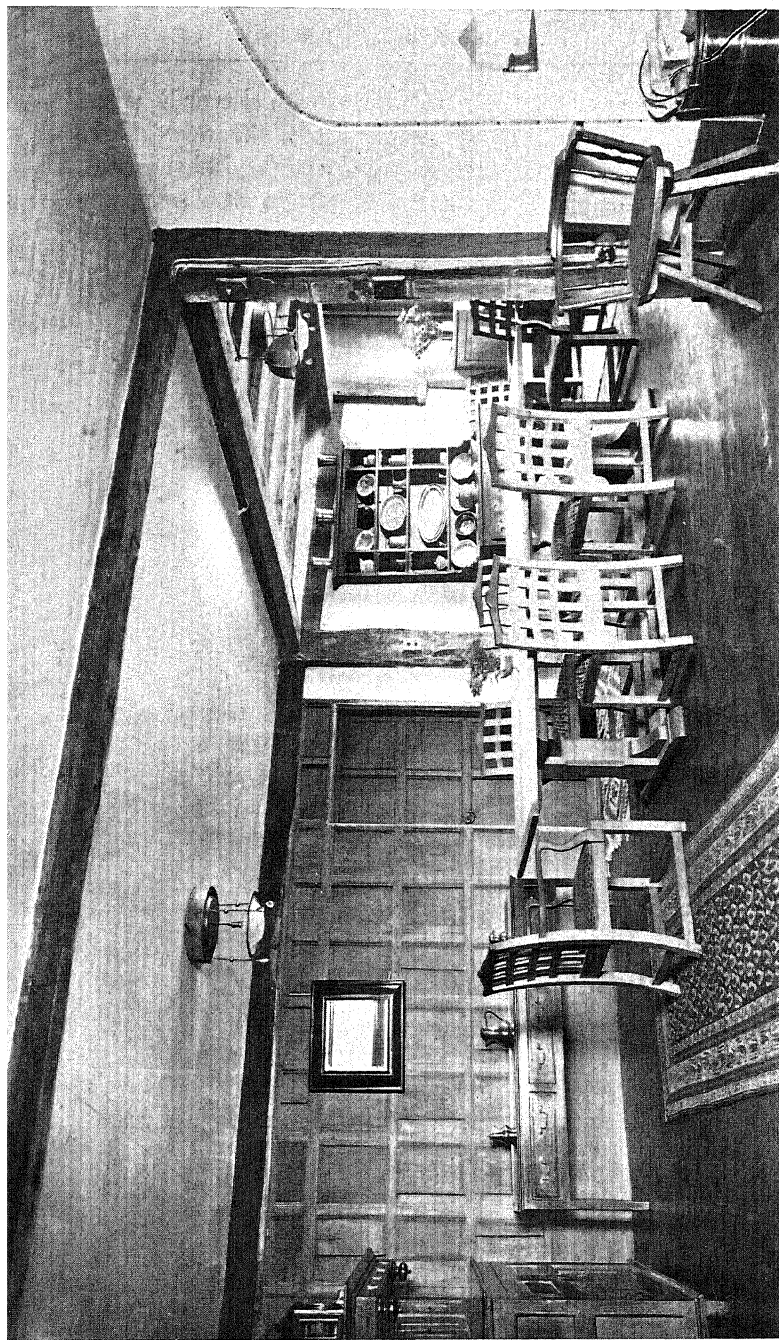
After all, we are living in the twentieth century, not in the seventeenth, and most of us are middle-class folk with (let us hope) an appreciation of refinement and appropriateness in our surroundings; and the furniture that suited the yeoman's farmhouse or the yokel's tap-room can hardly be regarded as suitable in a modern setting. If you choose old furniture therefore



THINGS OF EVERYDAY USE GROUPED DECORATIVELY ON A SIDEBOARD.

choose from a period that delighted in fine craftsmanship and refined design.

The one type of furniture which the present century may claim as its own is the deeply sprung, hair-stuffed lounge chair and Chesterfield settee, with all their comfortable kindred. To eliminate these from modern homes on æsthetic or "period"



NEW OAK AND OLD COMBINED IN A DINING-ROOM.

The new dining-table and chairs, in unpolished oak, are essentially modern in design, yet they harmonise agreeably with the old pieces used in the room.

grounds is about as sensible as to do away with electric light and revert to tallow candles for the same reason. Therefore, if the dining-room needs an arm-chair or two to complete its equipment, why not be thankful that our own age can produce something fit to be associated with the more elegant beauty of the eighteenth century?

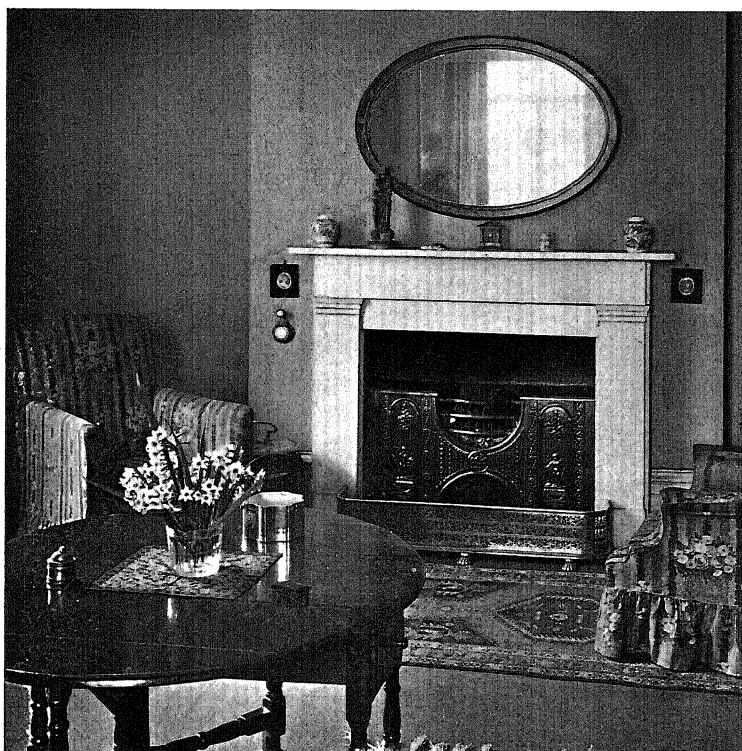


A PLEASANT PIECE OF FURNITURE THAT ACCOMMODATES ALL THE REQUISITES FOR THE DINING-TABLE.

Chapter IV

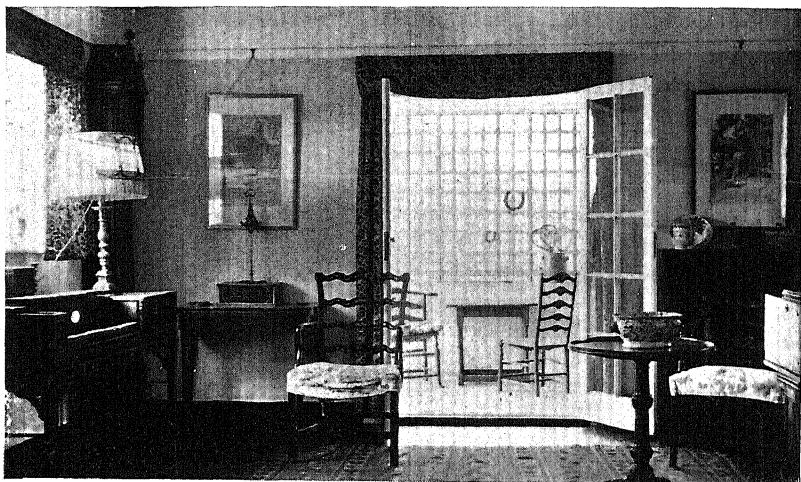
THE LIVING-ROOM

WITH the freer manner of living that prevails to-day, as compared with Victorian times, there has been a marked change in attitude towards the "drawing-room," which stood for a place where one was on one's best behaviour and in which a certain frozen dignity prevailed. It is now largely



A RESTFUL SCHEME ROUND ABOUT THE FIREPLACE.

disappearing in the moderate-sized house with which this book is concerned, and even the "sitting-room" with its correct air is being relegated to things of the past. In place of these two we have the much more direct "living-room"—that is to say, a room which is so furnished and appointed that one can live quite free and happily in it without any feeling of restraint. It means, for instance, that there will be chairs and settees which are thoroughly comfortable in use, as contrasted with those chairs of spindly character upon which one sat with a certain amount of

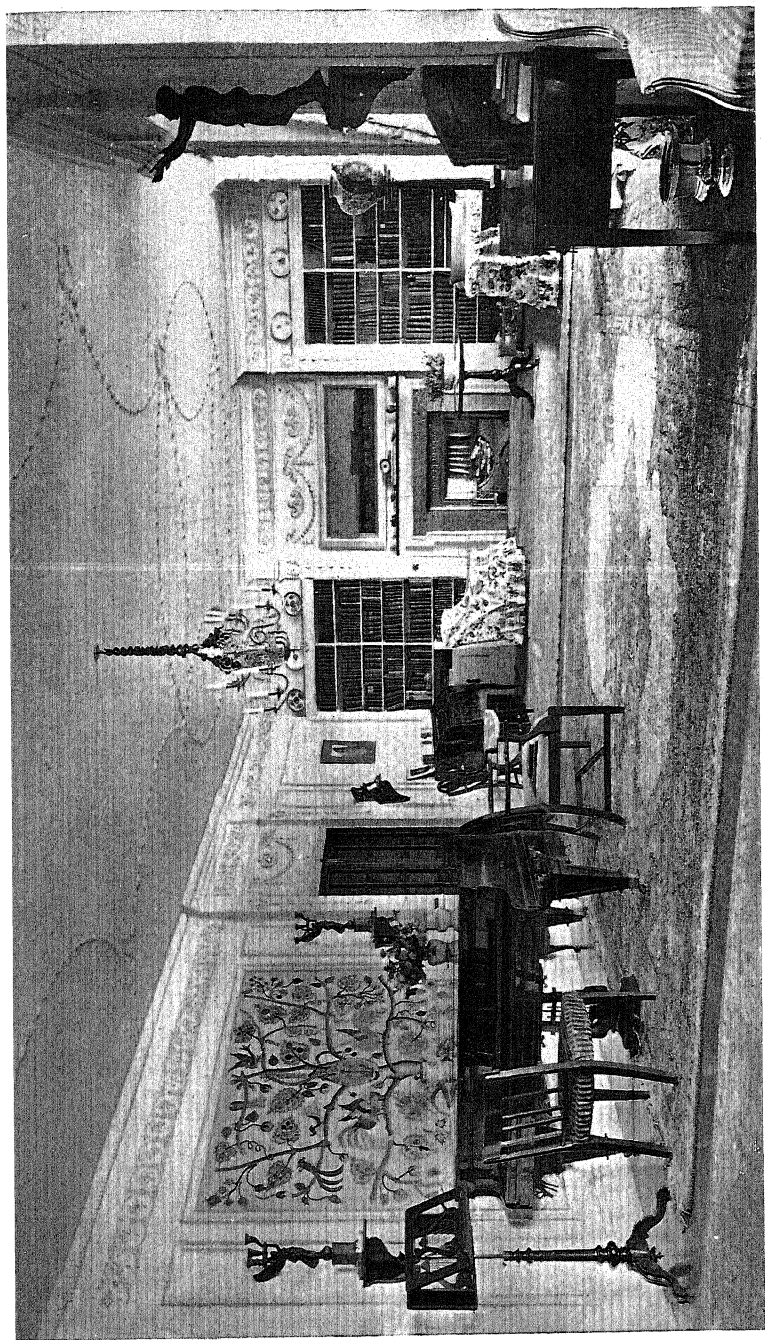


IN A LIVING-ROOM THAT OPENS INTO A GARDEN PORCH.

trepidation, or those other chairs which were enveloped in such precious covers that they lived in linen overcoats when not in use.

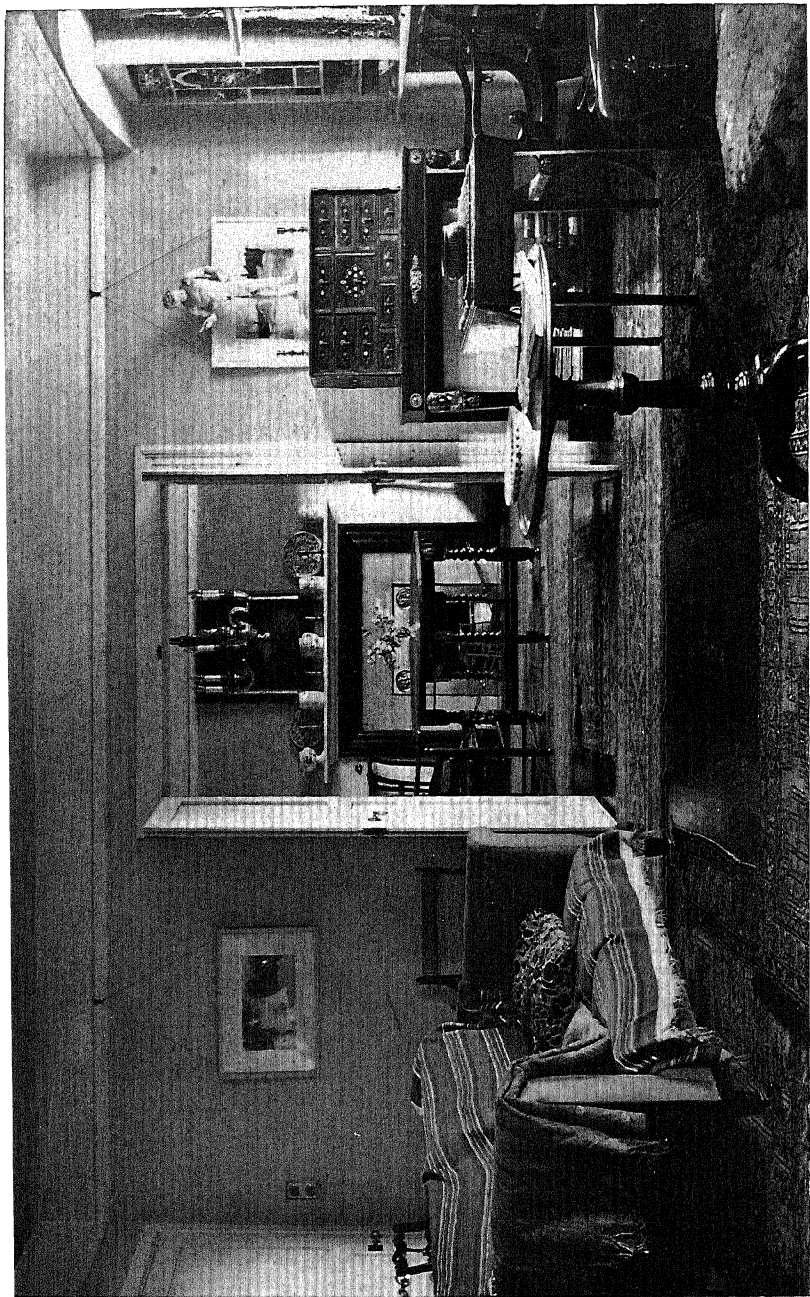
Our living-room therefore to-day can admit a great many things which we like to have there, such as the books and papers that used to be taboo. Above all it has become a pleasant place for any and every day of the week.

The furnishing of such a room will depend largely upon personal predilections, but the colouring of its walls, hangings, etc., is very much governed by the aspect. Living-rooms generally have a warm aspect, either west or south, and in such a situation cream distemper or paper is always satisfactory; or one may have a



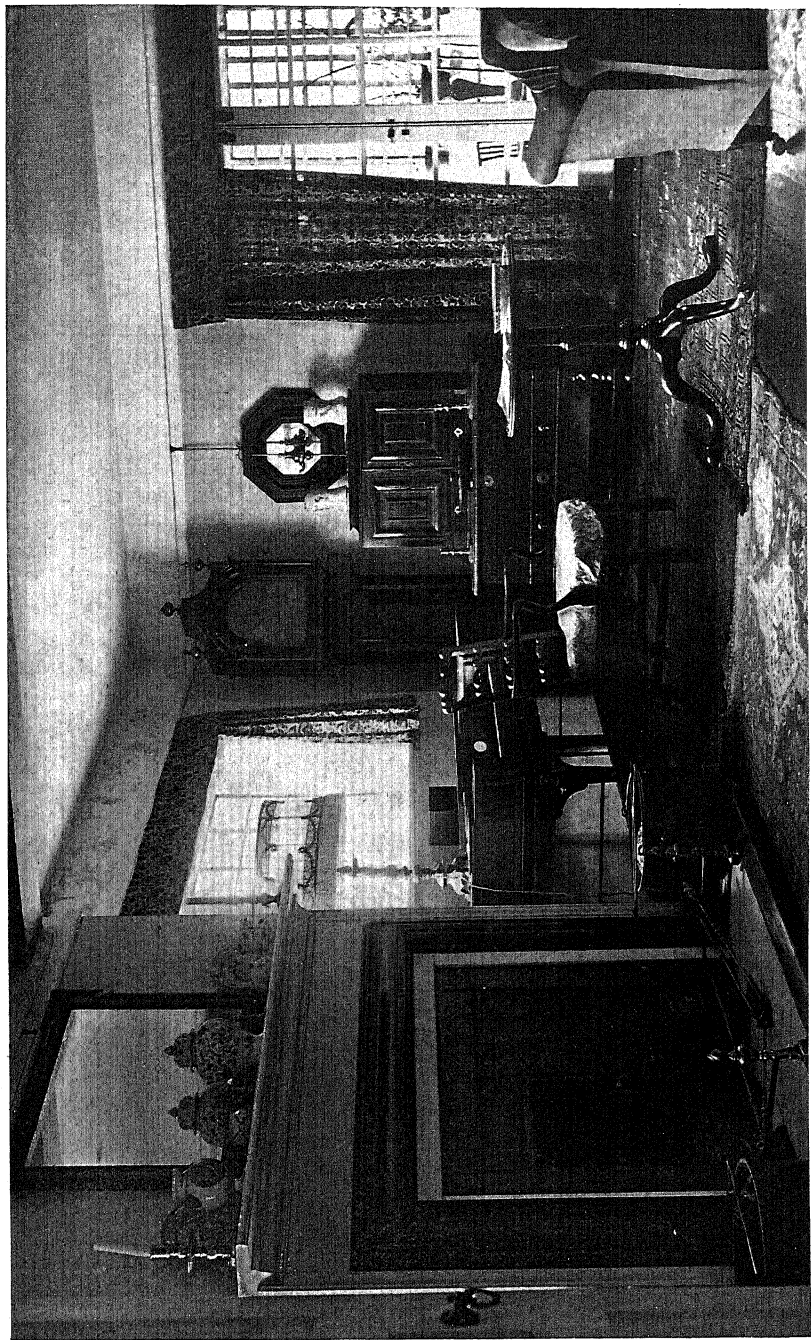
A WHITE LIVING-ROOM.

The walls are of enriched plasterwork of a delicate character. On one side the centre panel encloses a beautiful piece of embroidery, whilst over the mantel is a framed-in picture of an architectural subject.



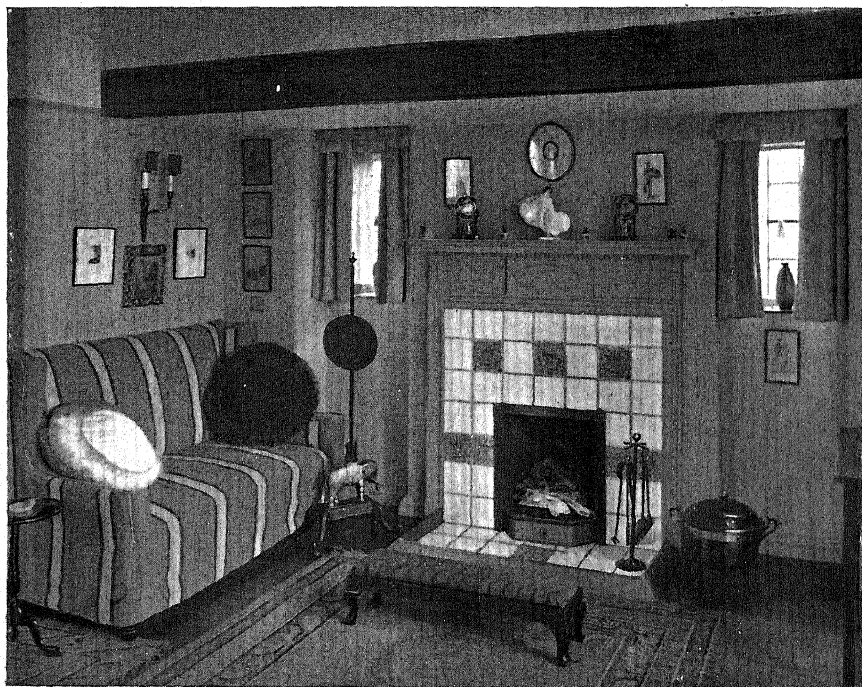
A FRIENDLY LIVING-ROOM.

A room of this sort invites one to enter. It looks what it is—an unaffected centre of home life, meant to be lived in.



A LIVING-ROOM WITH AN AIR OF COMFORT, YET NOT OVERCROWDED.
Here is defined the happy mean between the two extremes of "enough" and "over-much" in furnishing.

paper with a cream-yellow ground and narrow stripes of a darker colour breaking up its surface—not a pronounced stripe design, but a subtle one that gives body to the colour. Also to be commended is the use of oil paint with what are called “glazing” colours. With these there is a background of a certain colour, and over it is painted a thin semi-transparent film of another tone. This method, however, demands a nice sense of colour in order to attain a really satisfactory result. It is not one that is understood by the average house decorator, who is so obsessed with getting what he calls an “even” finish that the idea of a wall having the variety of tone produced by glazing one colour upon another is quite foreign to his tenets. But we are gradually getting away from the mechanical precision which reached its zenith in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and the



A COSY INGLE FIREPLACE WITH MODERN APPOINTMENTS.

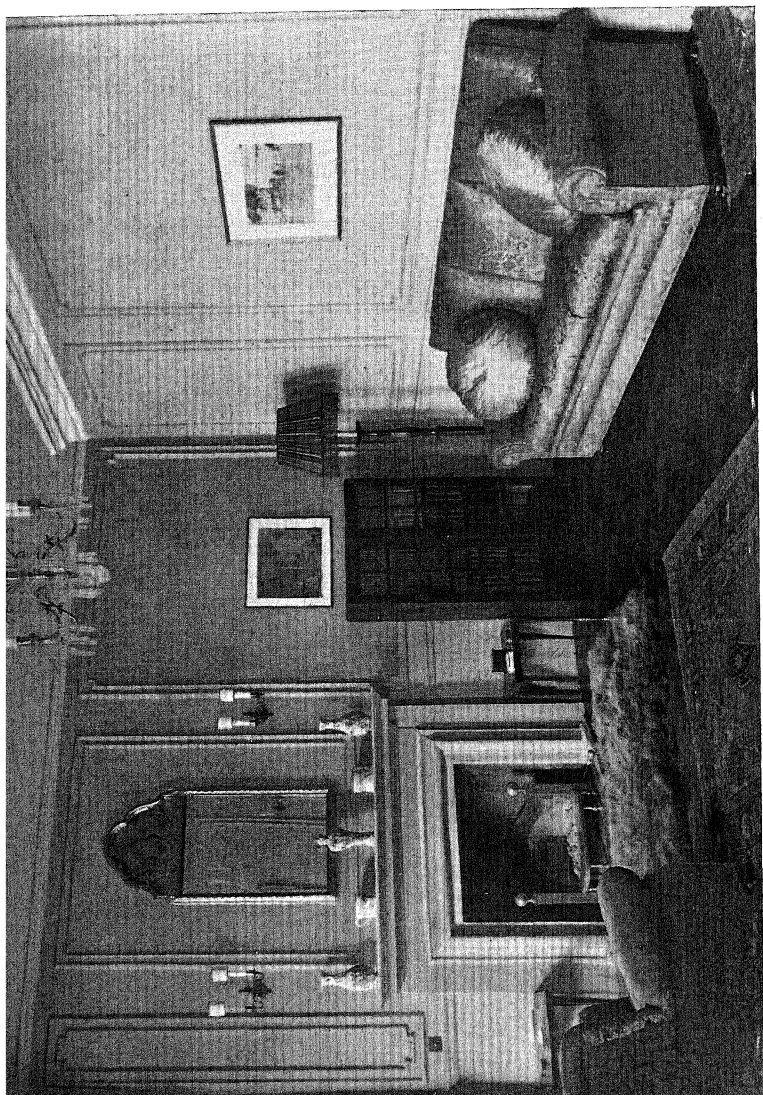
change is progressively for the better. In this matter of colouring, too, it is as well to bear in mind that the living-room will be used chiefly during the afternoon and evening, and colours that hold their own by artificial light should be favoured.

In the matter of floor treatment, here again it is unwise to be dogmatic, as tastes and conditions so greatly differ, but it is



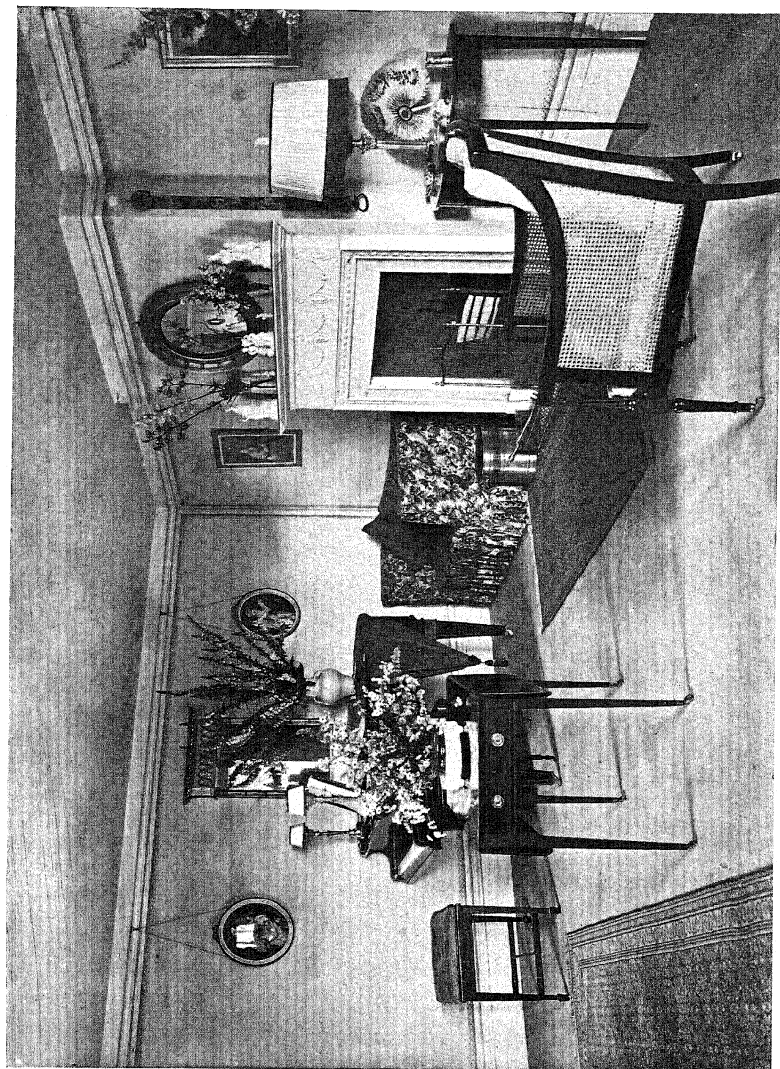
FIRESIDE COMFORT.

Note how everything here is harmoniously in scale.



WITH EVERYTHING MODERN.

In a London flat. The walls are a warm cream that serves as a restful background to the colours used in the furnishings.



A LIVING-ROOM SCHEMED TO DISPLAY COLOUR.

Papered buff walls with a rope border next the starting and cornice and marking the angles. On the floor is string-coloured felt, the woodwork is white, the picture frames and mirrors are gilt, and the loose covers are of gay printed linen.

suggested that where a floor must be tight-covered a self-coloured carpet or felt with rugs upon it will harmonise with most schemes, while in rooms which have good boards, or parquet flooring, only



A "READING" CORNER OF A LIVING-ROOM.

rugs are required, and there is a very ample choice from the Persians to the most modern of rugs.

Turning to the arrangement of the furniture, it is of first importance that this shall not be crowded in any way, and especially is it desirable that the middle of the room shall be kept more or less as a clear space, rather than cut up with meaningless small tables and chairs. If there is a piano, give careful considera-



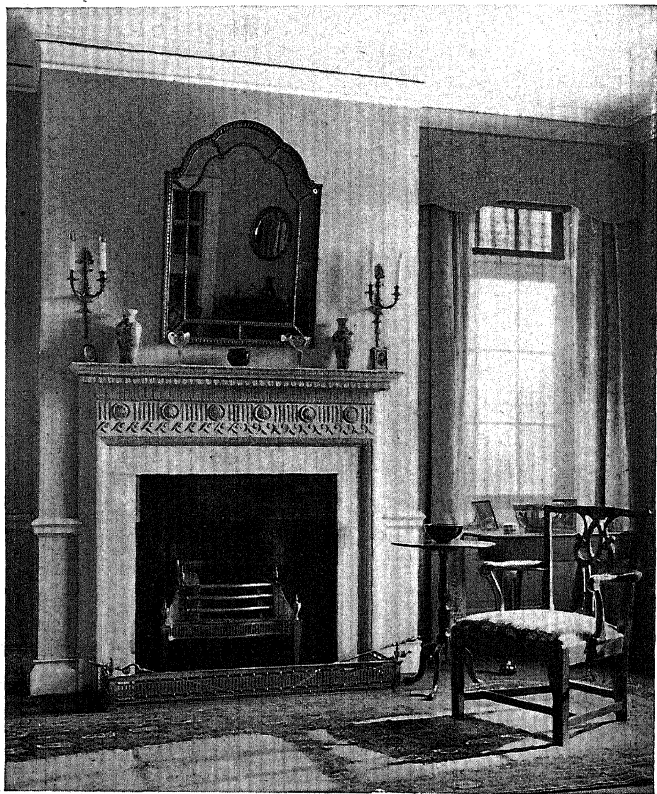
A PIANO WELL PLACED IN A LIVING-ROOM.

Note how the settee is arranged in relation to it, avoiding any feeling of isolation.

tion to finding the happiest place for it, both from the musical point of view and as regards its general appearance in relation to the other furniture. A piano is so distinctive a piece that it cannot be grouped: it must stand by itself, and unadorned. The all too common practice of covering a piano top with photograph frames and vases is to be wholly condemned, though one may readily agree to the use of a strip of brocade or needlework,

and perhaps a small bronze that is easily removable when the piano is in use.

Lighting fittings are among those details of the house which are so often sadly deficient, especially in living-rooms. There are plenty of good fittings obtainable, but in the case of those



A MODERN RENDERING OF THE LATE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MANNER.

which are hung from the ceiling it is well to note that often the effect of these is spoilt by a trivial ceiling rose and chain, whereas with a silken cord of substantial thickness, and tassels at ceiling level and at the junction with the fitting, the eye is satisfied.

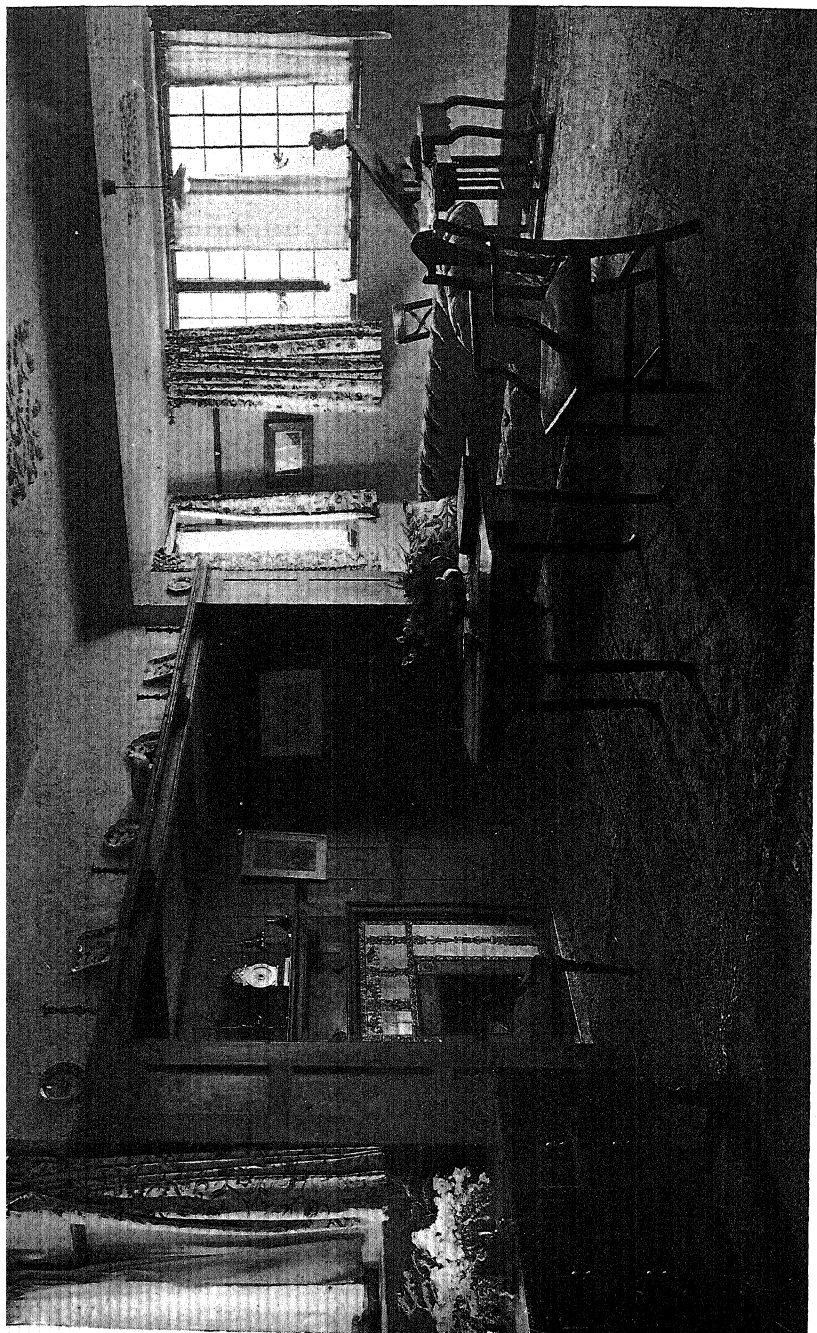
Pictures and mirrors are much pleasanter, too, when hung (as explained in another chapter of this book) so that the cord or

wire does not show at all. Where such a practice is not possible owing to the weight of the object, the best expedient is to have two small chains or cords on either side hanging vertically.

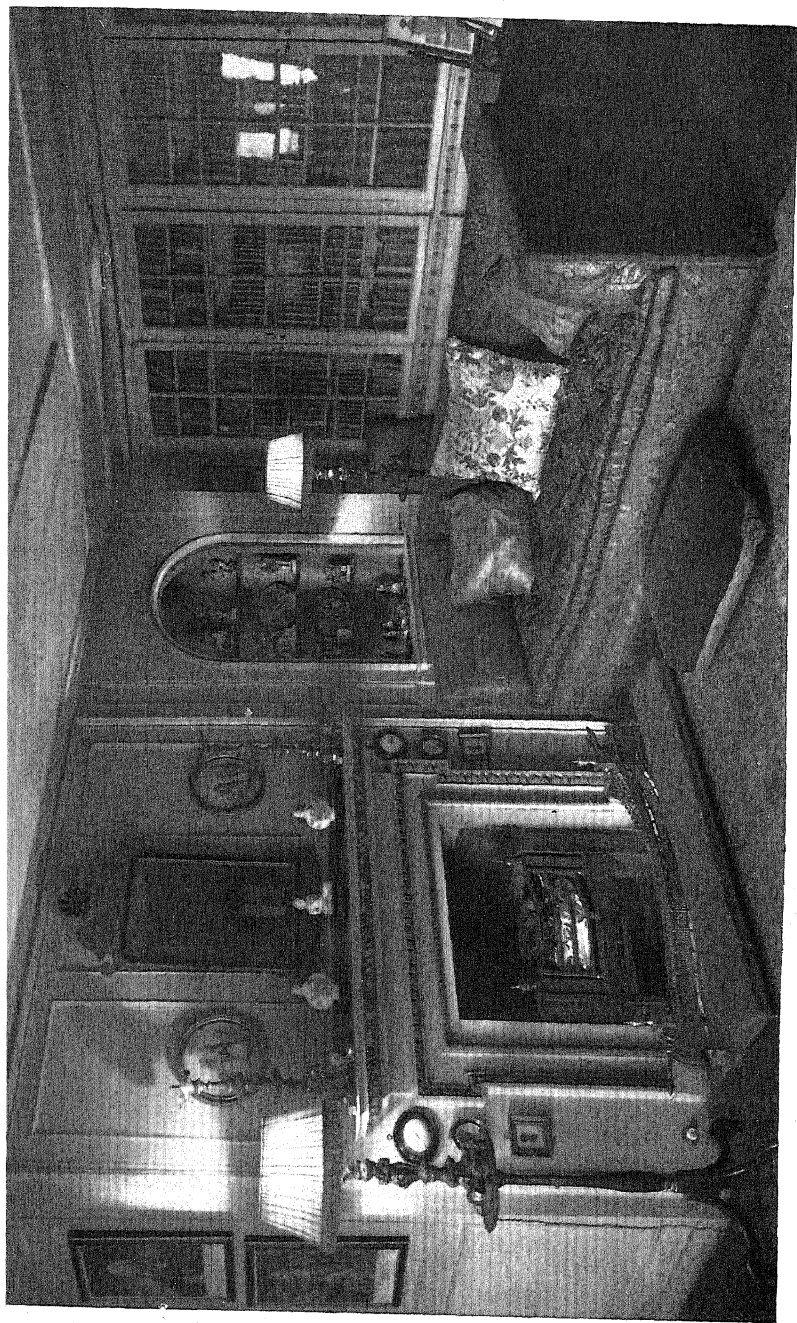


THE RIGHT SETTING FOR A HOB GRATE OF GEORGIAN PATTERN.

The mantelpiece is nearly always the focal point in a living-room, certainly for the best part of the year. Great care should be given to the choice of ornaments on it. A good clock and a few



A LIVING-ROOM WITH AN INGLE FIREPLACE.
There is a feeling of homeliness about this room.



A SITTING-ROOM IN AN OLD HOUSE.

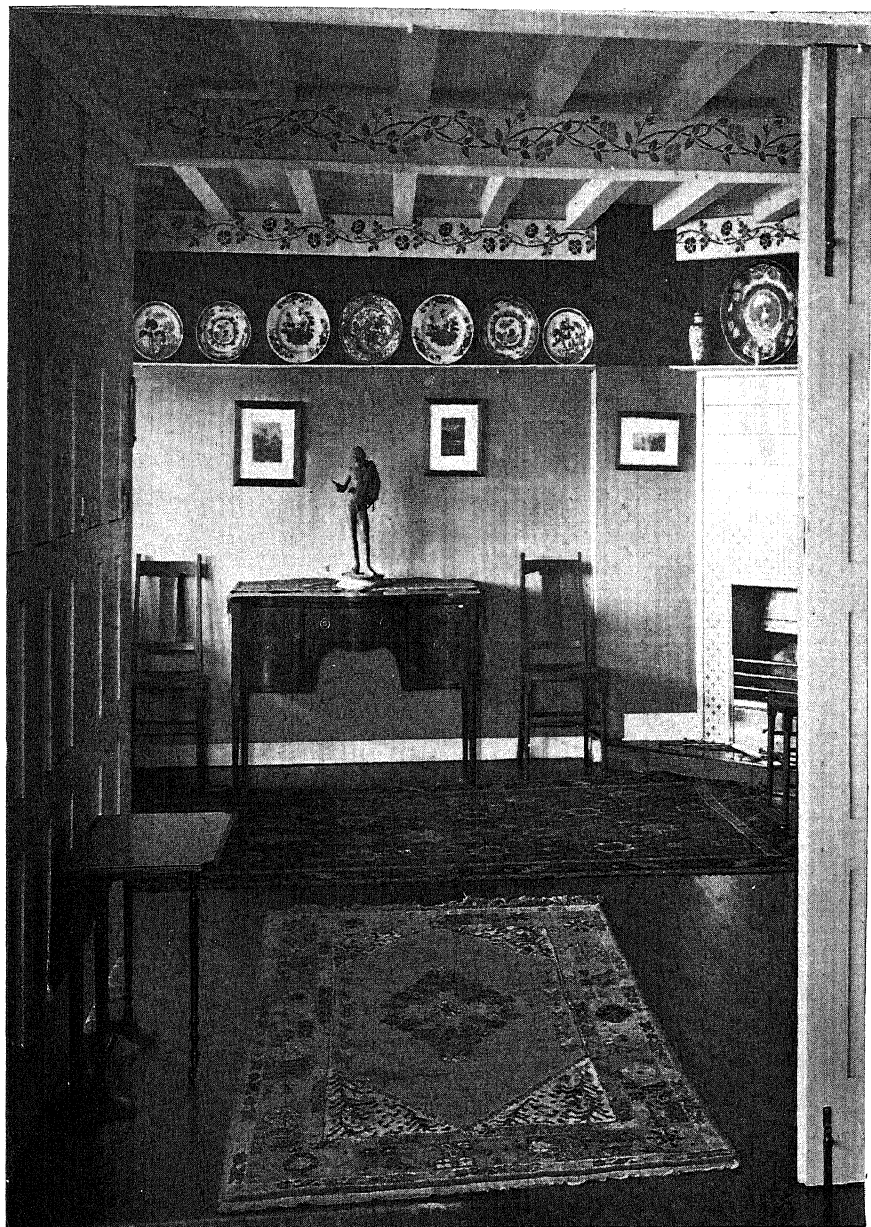
This old room, low and mellow, has its original personality preserved and enhanced by the many fine old things it contains.

good ornaments are all that is needed. Framed photographs and their kind are to be avoided, as being of more personal interest, and more suited to a bedroom. A mirror or a picture of appropriate subject and restful colour is happily placed over the mantelshelf, and a very good arrangement is to have a comfortable settee projecting from the wall at right angles to the fire, or put straight in front of it a few feet from the hearth. In this way is obtained a certain seclusion around the fire which is always enjoyable.

In a living-room especially it is important to observe a proper sense of scale. To speak of things being "in scale" is sometimes thought to be mere art jargon. Yet the true appreciation of scale—and that includes a sense of proportion—is the basis of successful furnishing and decoration. One might go very



THINGS OF GOOD OUTLINE ARE SEEN TO BEST ADVANTAGE AGAINST
LIGHT WALLS.

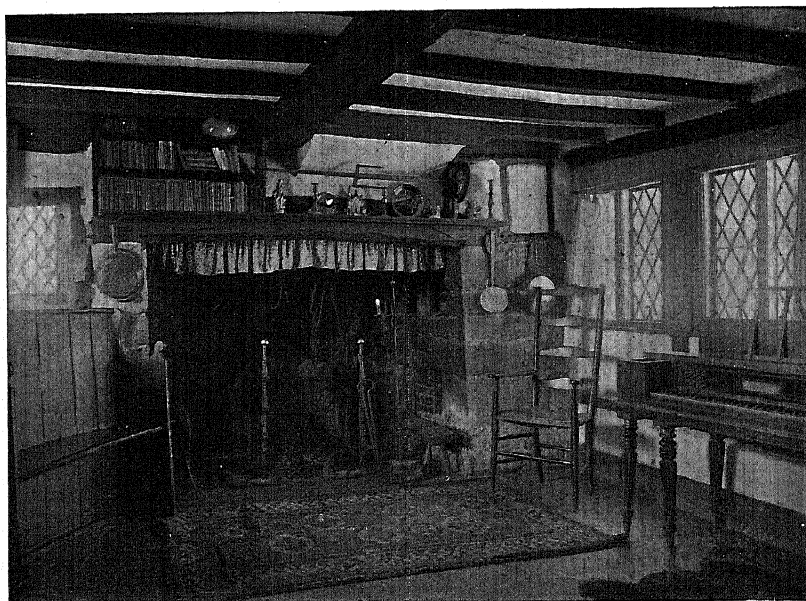


AN INDIVIDUAL DECORATIVE TREATMENT.

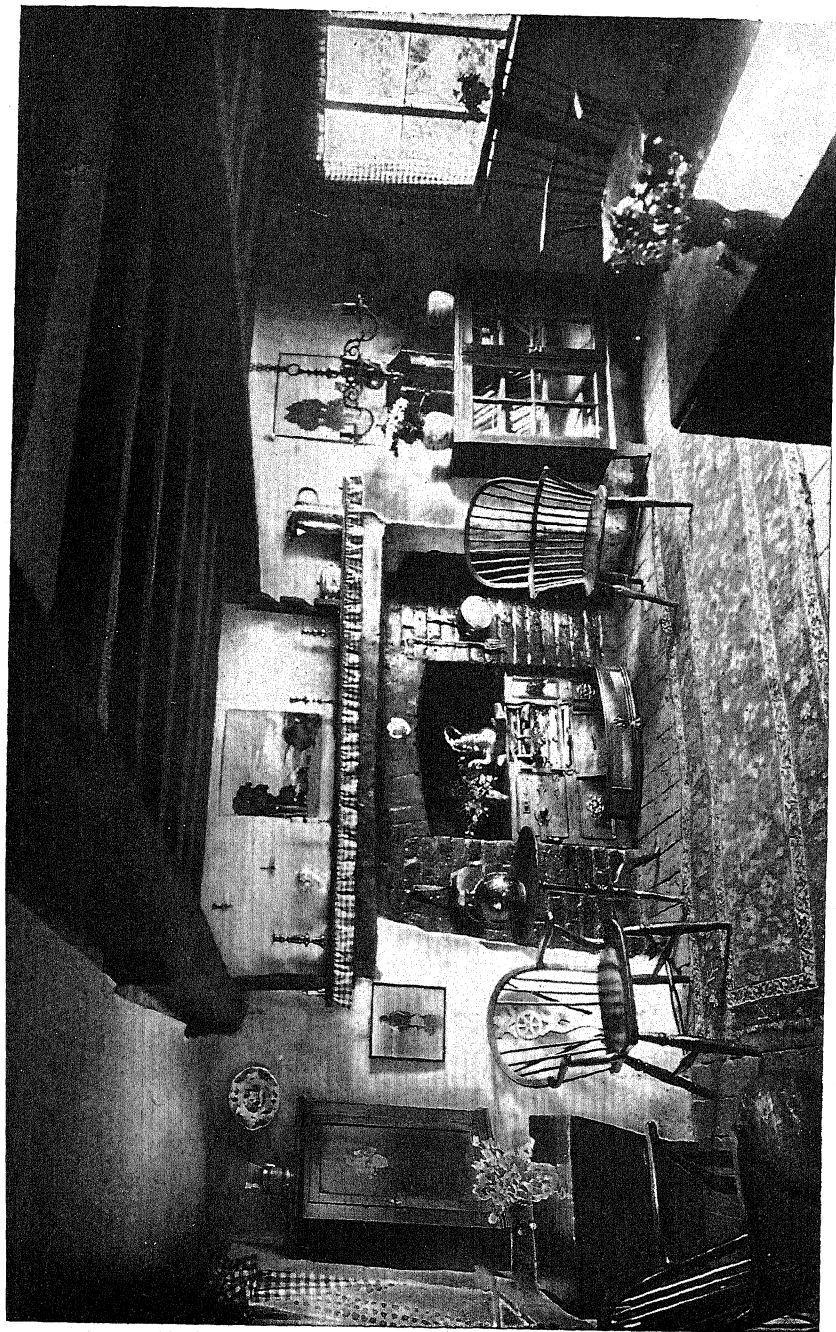
Bright notes of colour in the china and the stencilling on the beams are here seen happily combined with a simple scheme of white woodwork and softly tinted walls.

much farther and say that to have everything in scale is a problem throughout all the arts, whether it be the painting of a picture, the beating of a big drum, or the covering of a couch. And it is necessary to remember that this question of scale applies to the very texture of materials used. Coarse coverings, such as rough woven tapestry, are often used with bad effect where attention to such a detail would have added one of those finishing touches that give a room distinction. A material of coarse texture or heavy pattern may, in a particular living-room, look as out of place as a tailor-made costume would in a ball-room. It is fortunate that hygiene and taste have advanced together in such matters, and the thick pile carpets which once were considered the acme of floor covering have given place to rugs of much finer texture and more beautiful design.

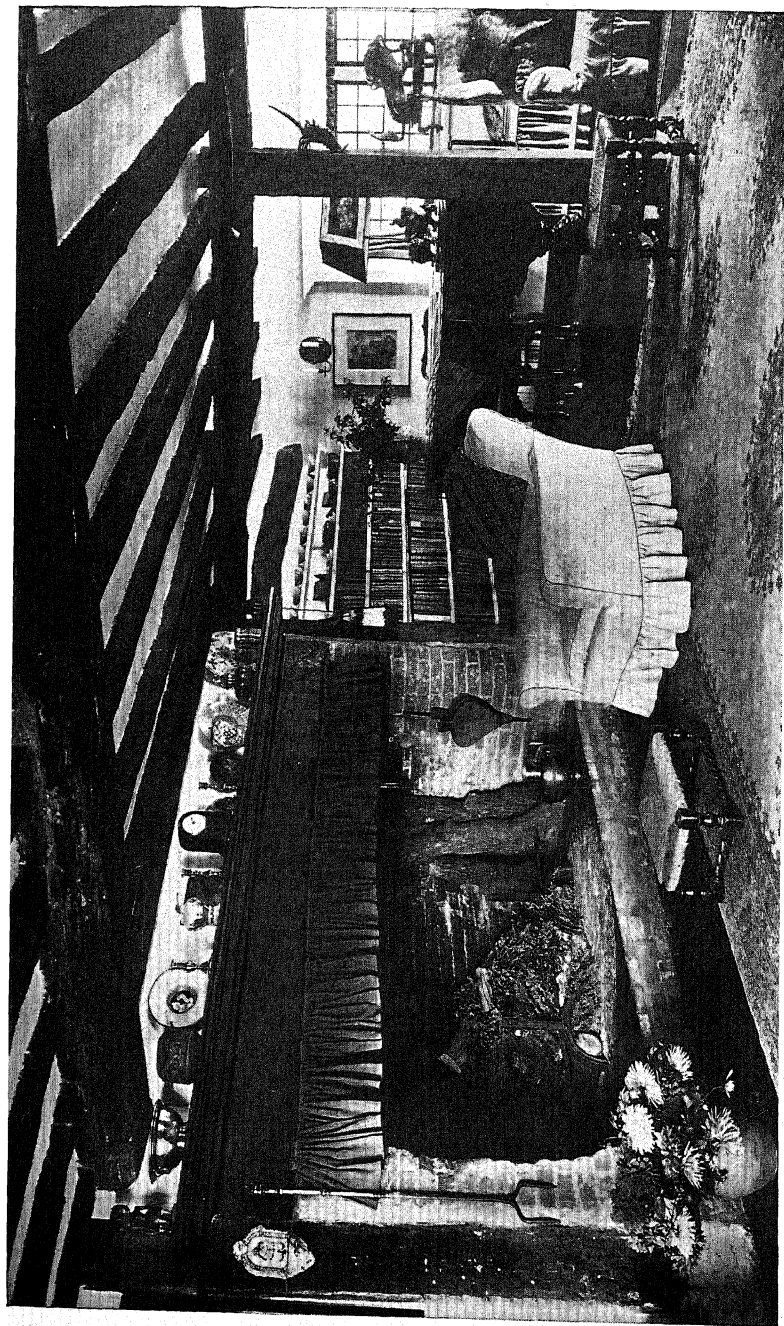
Above all, in furnishing the living-room, aim to make it livable, and to let it express your own individuality.



CORRECT TREATMENT FOR AN OPEN FIRE IN AN OLD COTTAGE WITH
BEAMED CEILING.



APPROPRIATE FURNISHING IN A COUNTRY COTTAGE LIVING-ROOM.



A LARGE LIVING-ROOM IN AN OLD FARMHOUSE ADAPTED TO MODERN NEEDS.

The room was originally the kitchen and ended at the cross-beam. The partition here was removed, and two rooms thus thrown into one. An old millstone has been let into the hearth.

Chapter V

THE BEDROOMS

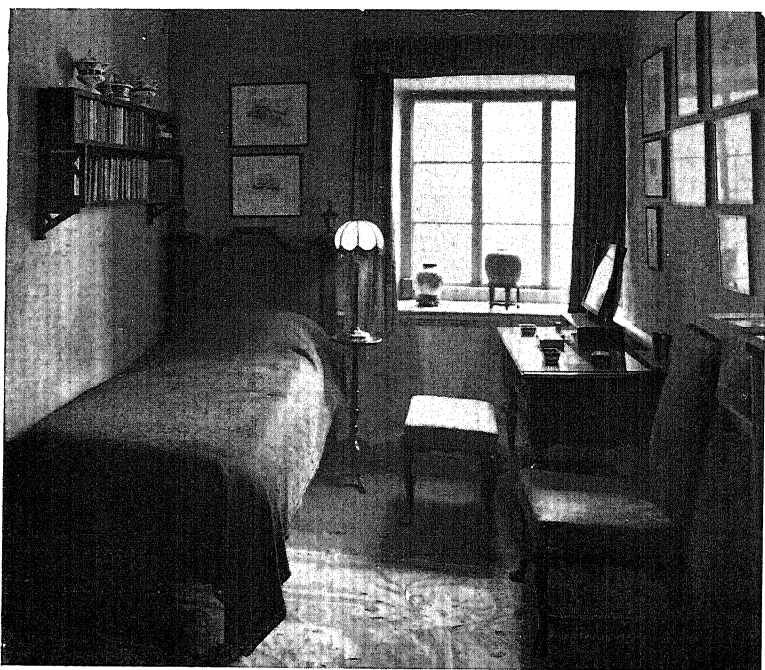
IN no room in the house are personal preferences in decoration and furnishing so pronounced as in the bedroom, and as these are innumerable, one cannot attempt anything more here than the barest reference to them, the present purpose being rather to deal with the salient features of the room.

The first consideration is aspect. If you do not like being awakened by the morning sun, do not choose a room that faces east; but a north aspect is wrong from every point of view, as it gets no sun at all. West is bright and sunny in the afternoons, but south is right all day. Perhaps the ideal aspect would be south-east or south-west, according to one's predilection for the morning or afternoon sun. Unfortunately, however, for most of us, in towns especially, circumstance has generally decided the aspect of our rooms, and we can but try to adjust matters, so far as is possible, by a skilful use of colour and form in our decoration and furnishing.

Speaking broadly, the general effect of a bedroom should be light, soft, and restful. If a patterned wallpaper be decided upon, the greatest care should be taken to select one that is not wearying to the eye. Plain papers in good tints are always pleasing, but the advantage which a patterned one possesses is that it does not show the wear and use of daily life so quickly.

The question of colouring depends entirely upon the aspect of the room and the amount of light it receives. The colder colours, blues, greens, greys, and mauves, should be handled very sparingly unless the room gets more than its share of sunlight; and even then the pale shades of those colours should be avoided because they can never hold their own, decoratively speaking, against bright sunshine; in fact, pale blue and pale green serve no useful purpose whatever from a decorator's point of view.

Grey is in a somewhat different category. Being a neutral shade it can be used for walls in rooms which have even a cold aspect, provided it is not leaden and the necessary warmth of colouring is supplied by curtains, carpet, bedspread and other items. But cream-coloured walls would look better in the majority of cases, and creamy-white paint is the pleasantest for woodwork.



A BEDROOM INFORMALLY FURNISHED.

The stub-end bed, as here used, has the special merit of economising space in a small room.

The floor covering sometimes presents rather a puzzling problem, many ultra-hygienists going so far as to say that bedroom floors ought to be of linoleum only, with a rug beside the bed as a concession to luxury. So Spartan a suggestion, however, appeals to few: but certainly a fitted carpet is open to criticism, not only from the hygienic standpoint, but also because

it cannot easily be taken up for cleaning, or turned round to equalise the wear.

Cover the floor with plain linoleum by all means, or, better still, with cork carpet, which is softer and warmer to the tread, but have a square of carpet or rugs as well for the sake of comfort. The advantages of laying linoleum or cork carpet all over the floor are obvious. No dust can work up between the floor-boards into the underside of the carpet, no under-felt is necessary, and the room is not made uninhabitable when the carpet is taken up to be beaten or cleaned.

The carpet should strike the deepest note in the colour scheme, whether it be in harmony with or in contrast to the walls. Good



A BEDROOM FURNISHED WITH FINE OLD PIECES.

On the bed an embroidered shawl is used to great advantage.

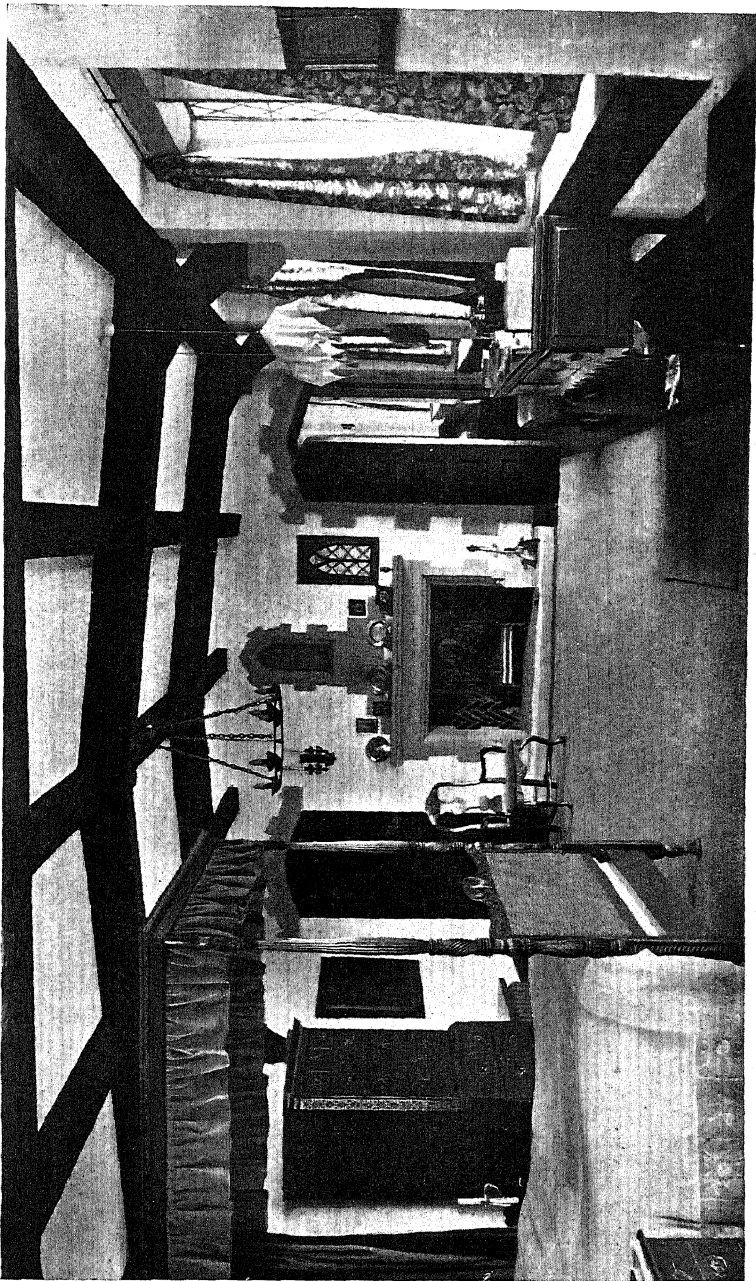
Oriental designs in subdued colours always look well, or you can use a Wilton or Axminster carpet with some simple geometrical pattern, though possibly, if the walls are covered with a patterned paper, a plain string-coloured carpet would be the best choice of all for a bedroom.

With regard to the furniture of our bedrooms, we are still somewhat slaves to the conventional "suite." A dressing-table and a wardrobe are obvious necessities, but there is no reason why



A FOUR-POSTER AS THE DOMINANT FEATURE.

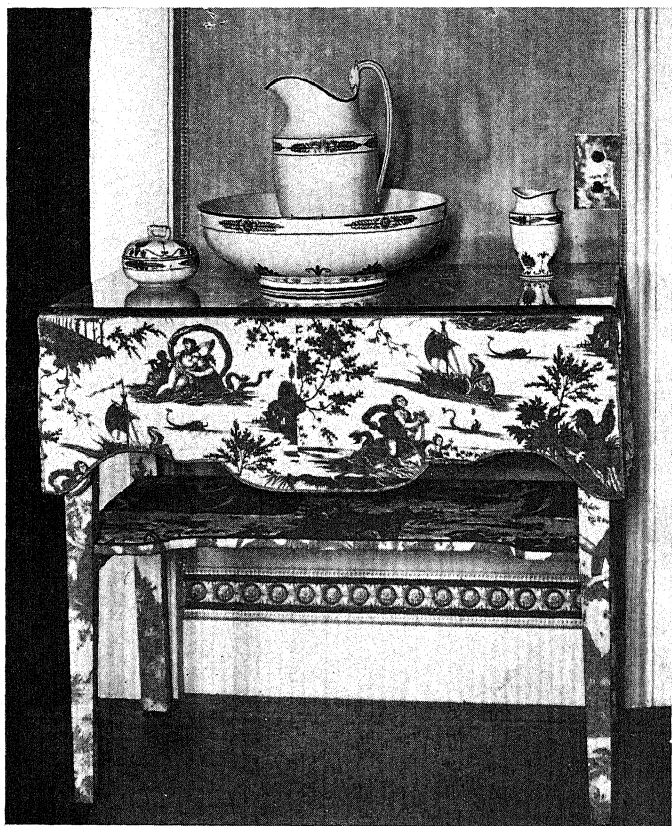
they should match each other so meticulously, with a washstand *en suite*. And the last-named piece of furniture is gradually becoming obsolete, though some folk seem to preserve it as a fetish not to be eliminated because it "matches" the wardrobe and dressing-table, even though it is never used. Bedroom chinaware, too, presents greater scope for the display of bad taste in design and form than almost any other domestic crockery, which is an additional reason why many people have banished from their homes the clumsy washstand, with its drudgery of carrying and emptying.



A BEDROOM WITH OLD FURNITURE SERVING MODERN USES.

The carpet is of a dull sage-green colour, and the windows are hung with a patterned chintz, in which cherry predominates. The plastered walls are kept plain white.

The ideal bedroom, of course, has a bath-dressing room attached. Failing this ideal, the existing bathroom is very commonly made to serve for the ablutions of the family. A fitted lavatory basin in the bedroom, with hot and cold water, is a great convenience, and, if exception be taken to its appearance, it can be accommodated in a cupboard built across the angle formed by two outside walls. A welcome addition to such a



AN INGENIOUS AND HAPPY TREATMENT.

This is an ordinary deal table with a drawer and shelf. The whole has been covered with a printed fabric, the front of the valance being shaped and stiffened to serve as a flap, concealing the drawer. The top of the washstand is covered with a piece of plate glass.

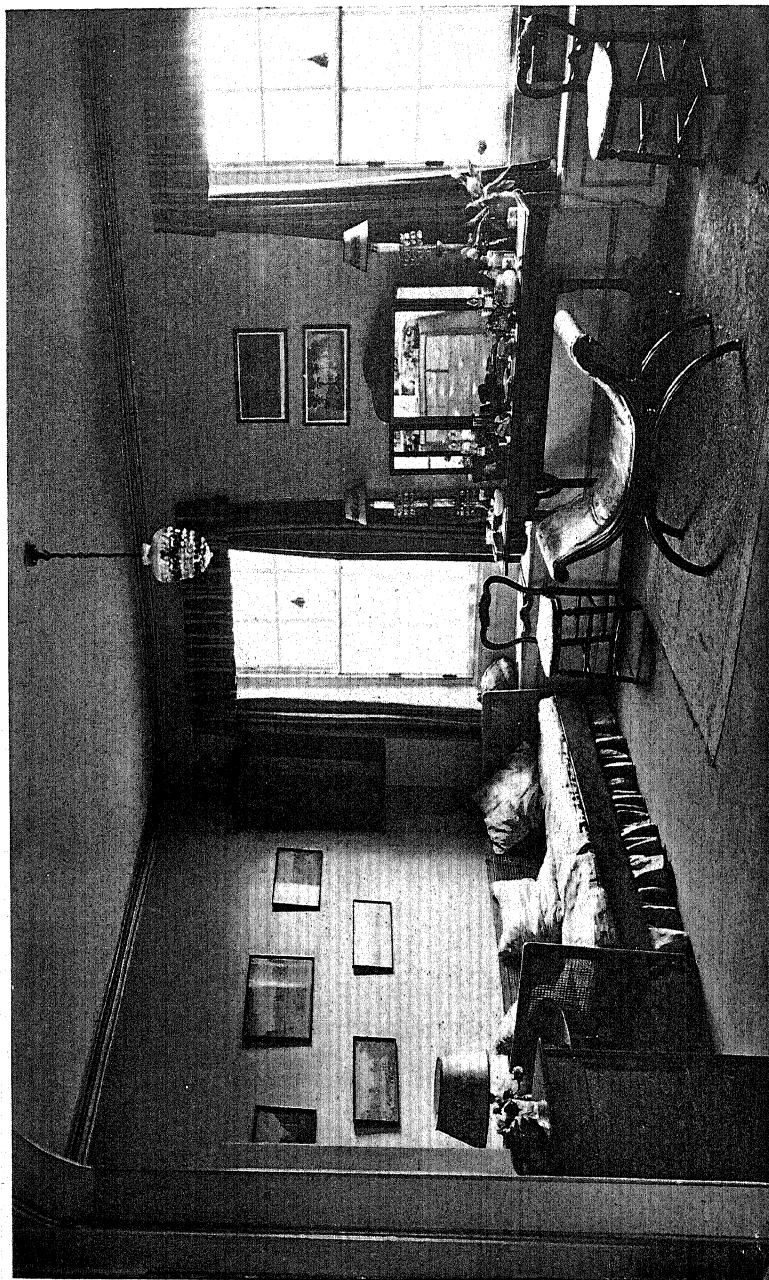


AN OLD CARD TABLE MAKES AN EFFECTIVE WASHSTAND.

With one flap turned up against the wall.

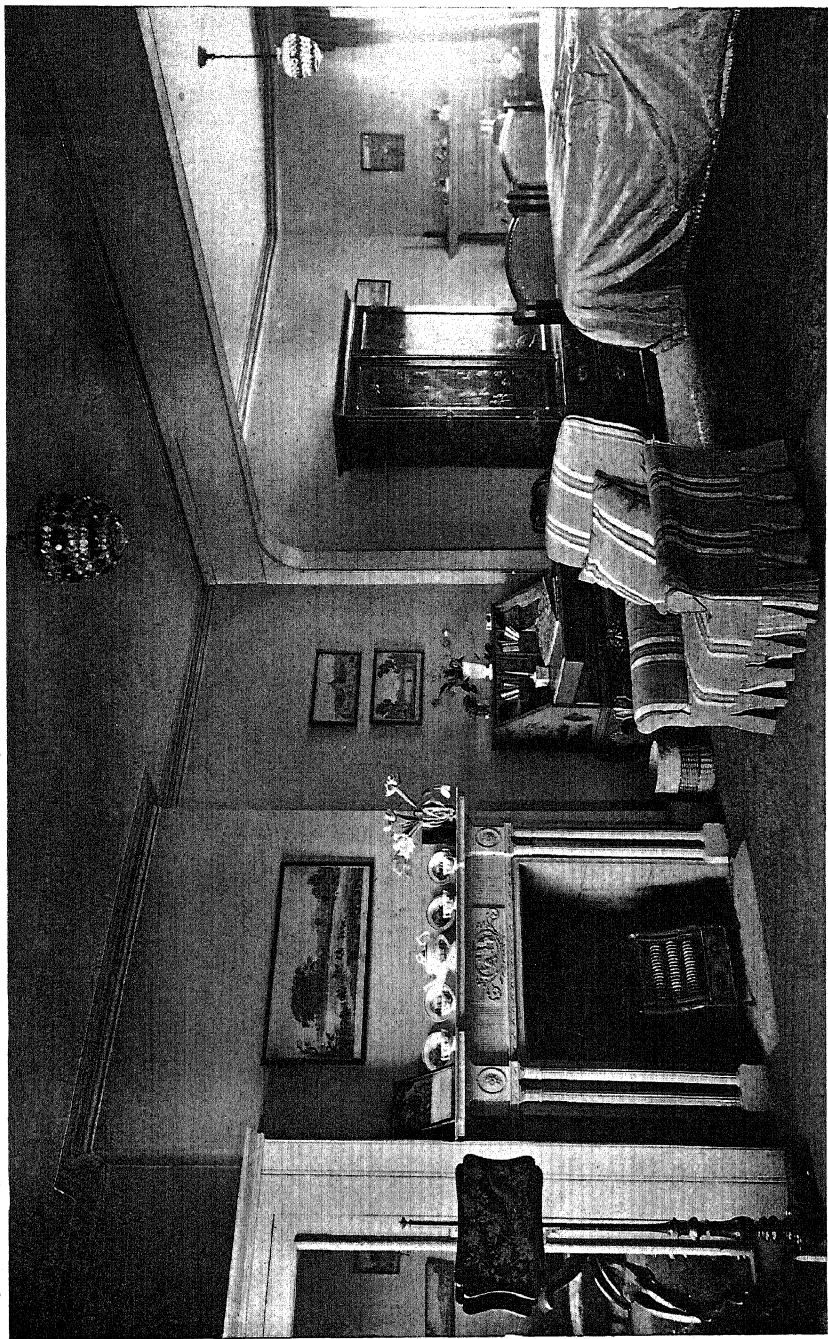
fitment is a full-length mirror on the door, and a luxurious appearance is obtained when the interior is tiled and fitted up with porcelain basin, nickel-plated taps, plate glass shelves and mirrors. Proper ventilation must not be overlooked, and, if possible, a small window should be introduced when contriving such an arrangement in an existing room.

Some people use their bedrooms as a sort of extra sitting-room, and, in flats and small houses especially, it is a very



IN A WOMAN'S BEDROOM.

A sofa table makes an excellent dressing-table. Here a triple mirror is used, and the Empire seat just suits the purpose to which it is put.



ONE GOOD BEDROOM CONTRIVED OUT OF TWO SMALL ONES BY REMOVING THE DIVIDING WALL.

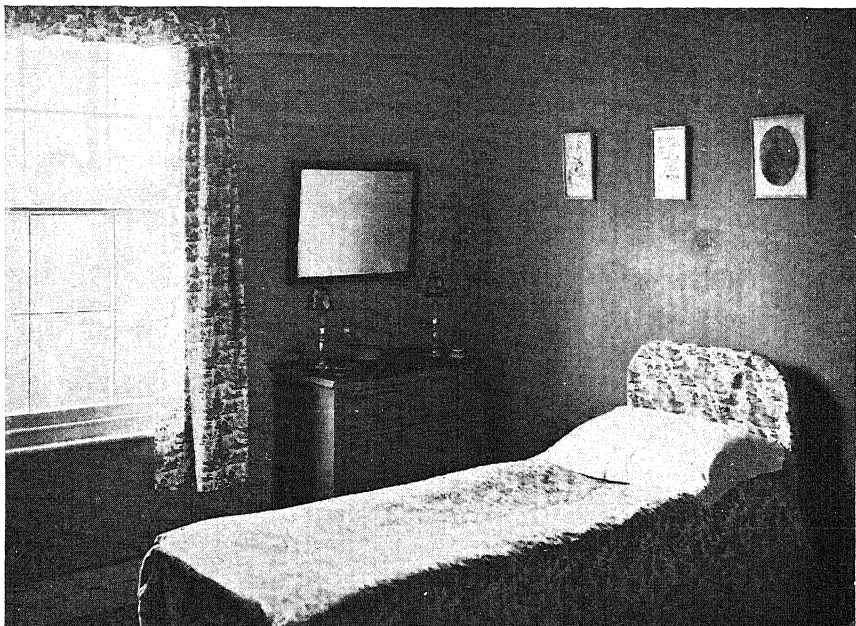
convenient plan to have a desk and some comfortable chairs in the room, so as to be able to read, write, or rest there undisturbed. With the paraphernalia of washing out of sight, there is nothing in the remainder of the necessary bedroom furniture to preclude the use of the room as a sitting-room.

By far the most important piece of furniture, of course, is the bed. But even the most beautiful bedstead will prove but an elegant piece of camouflage if the springs and the bedding are not well chosen. The craze for cheapness which spread over the country some years ago is responsible for much discomfort in the form of inferior beds, the so-called "combination" type being a particularly unpleasant variety (*i.e.*, a combination bed is one in which the wire spring is part and parcel of the bedstead itself).

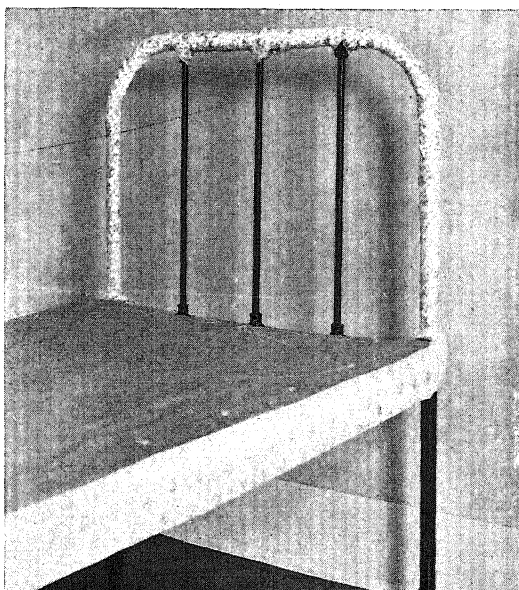


A PAINTED BEDSTEAD.

With multi-coloured floral border on a black ground.

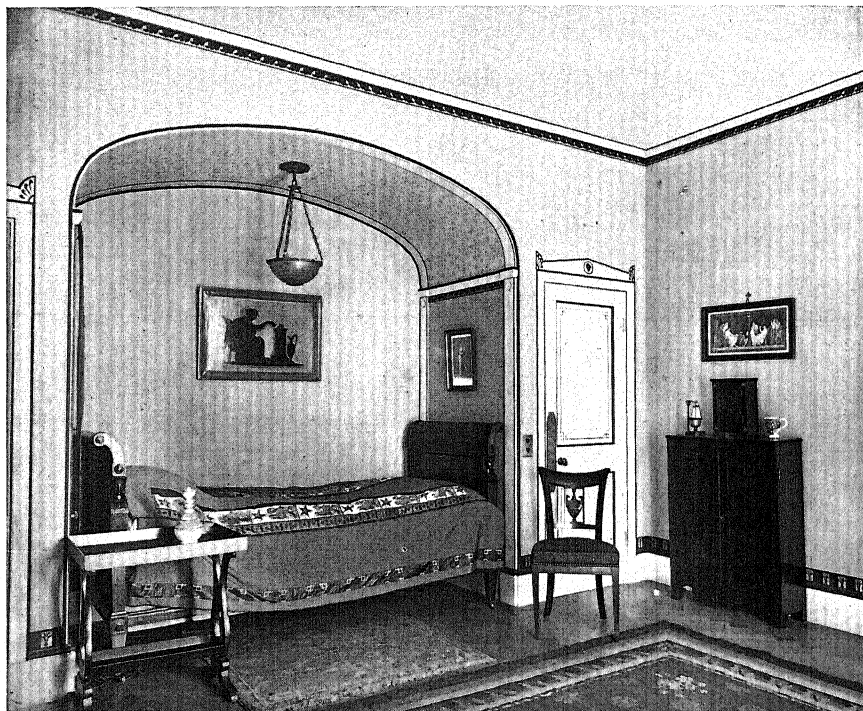


When a bedstead is not of a pleasing design, the frame at head and foot can be encased with material, and a valance fixed on each side. The bedstead here shown is one of ordinary hospital pattern. The iron frame is bound around with strips of stuff before the "cases" are fitted, and a strip of double thickness is sewn along the sides of the mattress protector. The valance is fixed to this by snap fasteners.



CAMOUFLAGING AN IRON BEDSTEAD.

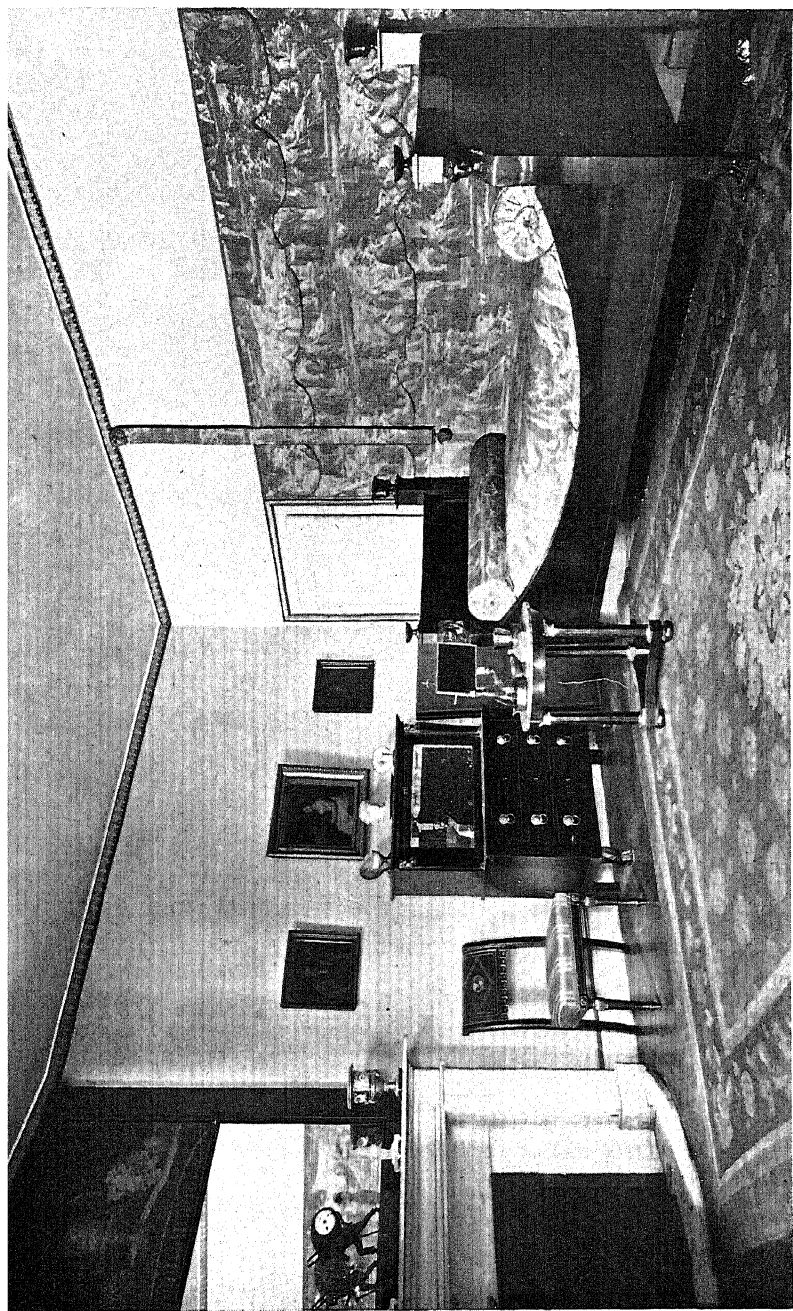
The best quality woven-wire springs have a certain amount of resilience, but their great fault lies in the fact that the only direction in which they can accommodate themselves to the weight of the body is by sagging towards the middle, like a hammock, and the sleeper thereby is not resting in a proper attitude. Our health and well-being depend so largely upon good sleep that many



A BEDROOM, WITH BED RECESS, FURNISHED IN ENGLISH EMPIRE STYLE.

“light sleepers” would find themselves materially benefited by the simple expedient of purchasing a new bed of the spiral spring type, of which there are one or two excellent varieties on the market.

Turning next to bed draperies, these, if any, should carry out the general scheme, and a white bedspread should be taboo. An expanse of dead whiteness, even on a single bed, makes a glaring



A MAN'S BEDROOM FURNISHED IN FRENCH EMPIRE STYLE.

The bedspread is a piece of Toile de Jouy, and on the wall behind it is a hanging of the same delightful fabric.

note in any room. So let the bedspread harmonise with the room, not oppose it.

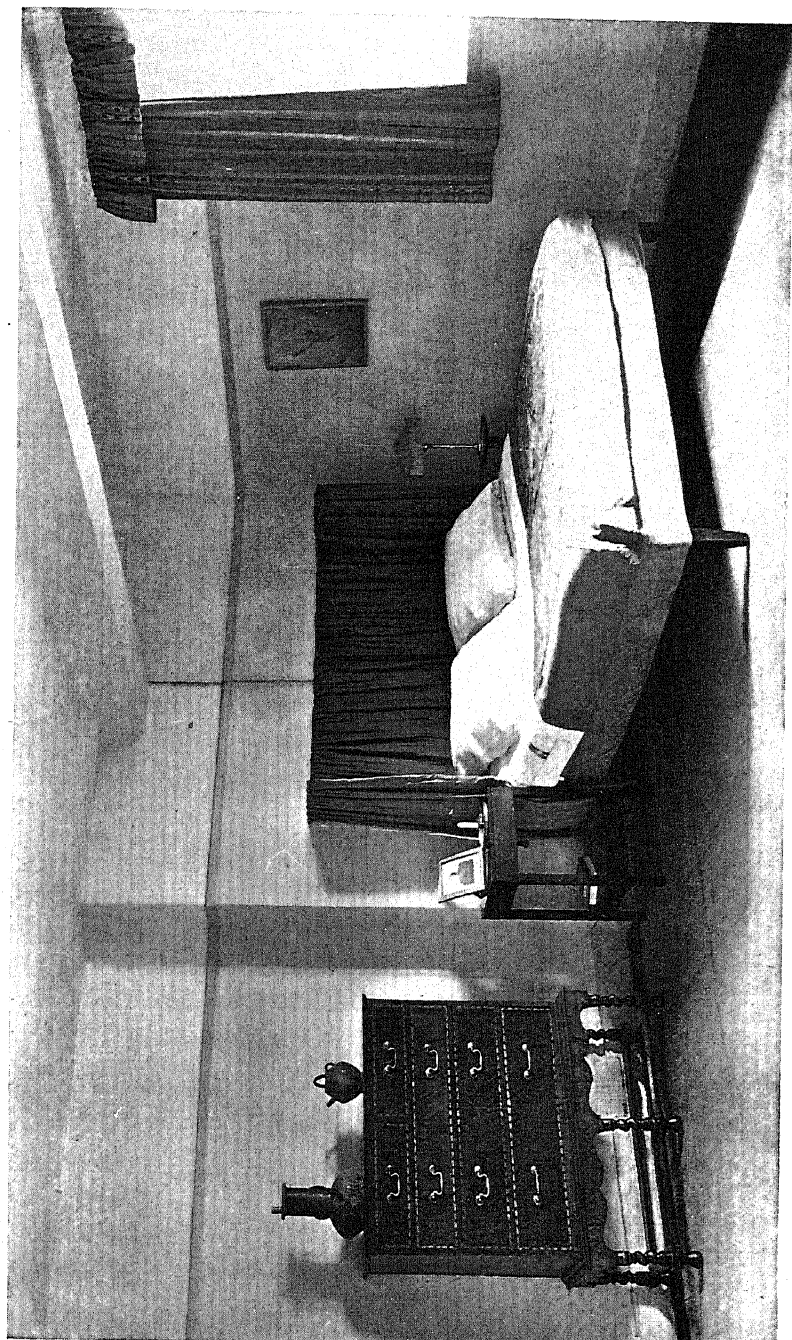
Lighting should be conveniently arranged in relation to the principal pieces of furniture, and a bedside lamp nicely shaded, or a pendant, with pendant switch, should shed a comfortable glow over those lazy hours of reading in bed.

With regard to the dressing-table, the conventional piece with swing mirror attached is no longer our only choice. We have begun to realise the possibilities of antique furniture that was designed for quite other purposes. Some enjoy the roomy top of an old spinet upon which stands a reproduction of an antique swing mirror. Bow- or serpentine-fronted sideboards of the smaller sizes make charming dressing-tables; so also do fine old chests of drawers. They should have plate glass cut to fit the top and be used without toilet covers. Delightful little swing mirrors are to be found in plenty.

Individual requirements and the already selected dressing-table will dictate the style and size of the wardrobe, which can be chosen to accord with the other pieces of furniture in the room.

Coming to the question of curtains, chair covers and other fabrics, these necessarily must suit the style of the room, but in every case it would be best to have them of a washable material—plain if the walls are patterned, or *vice versa*. Cretonne or printed linen curtains need lining, otherwise they look “thin” against the light. There is no necessity for any curtain to come more than, say, 1 foot below the level of the window sills. Most windows are overlooked and it is necessary therefore to screen them. A plain net curtain hung from a small rod at the top of the window close against the glass gives the needed seclusion. The modern cream or coloured filet net serves the purpose admirably and is beautifully clear, of all colours the golden yellow giving the best effect of light.

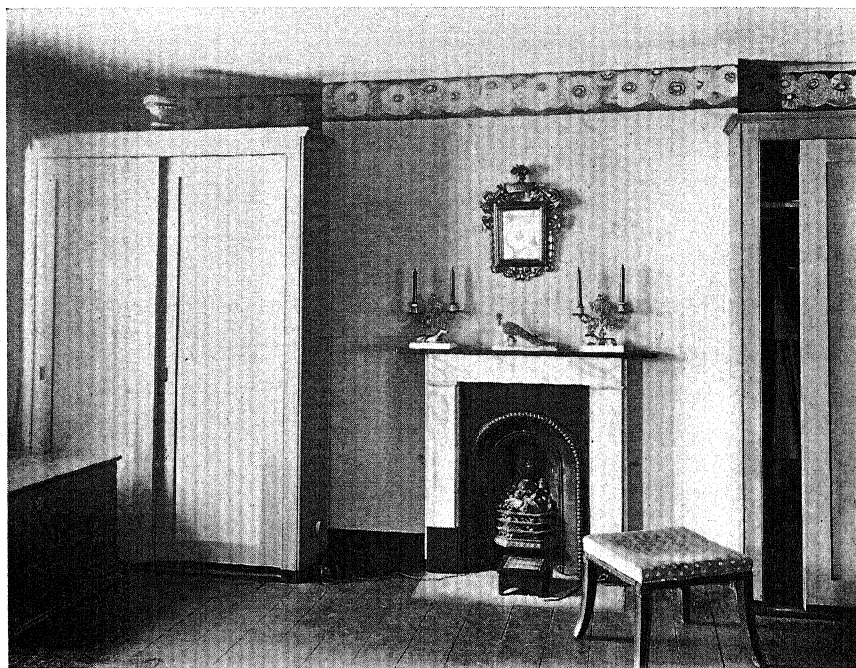
The old unhygienic and unbeautiful days of heavy curtains trailing on the floor, or looped up with ropes as thick as one's arm, have departed, and the long Nottingham lace curtains (a pair to each window) are following them reluctantly, but surely, to the limbo of forgotten things.



A SIMPLE SCHEME.

The bed is just a box mattress fixed on short legs, with a curtained treatment at the head.

Finally, it should be possible to render a bedroom comfortably dark, even in the daytime, and if roller blinds are fitted these could be of dark green linen or holland. Or, if preferred, the curtains could be lined with a dark shade of the predominating colour in the room, and for this purpose nothing is more suitable than one of the new fadeless fabrics.



BEDROOM FITMENTS NEATLY CONTRIVED.

With ample hanging and shelf accommodation enclosed by sliding doors.

Chapter VI

THE BED-SITTING-ROOM

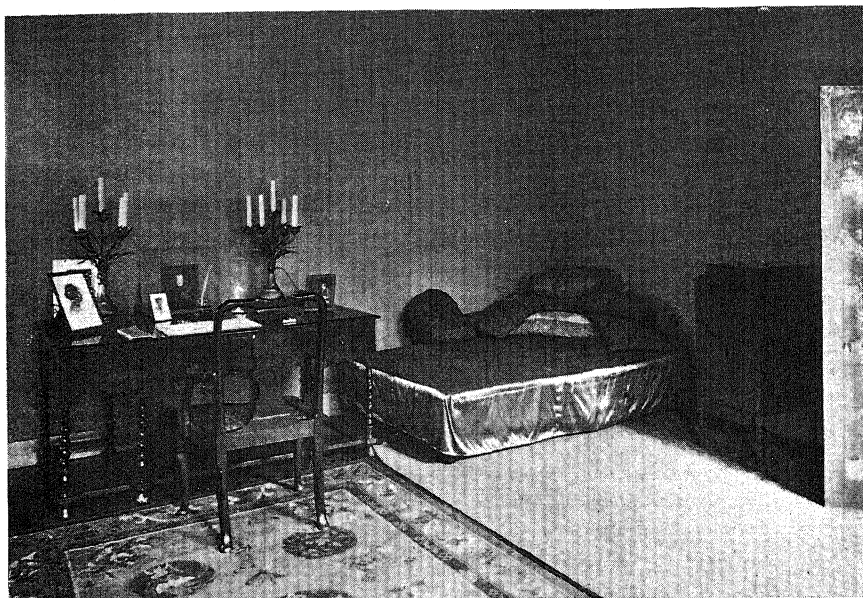
OVERCROWDING in great cities, particularly in London, has resulted in many bedrooms becoming bed-sitting-rooms. Not that much alteration in furnishing has taken place. A bedroom has been provided with a table and easy chair, and the rent has gone up. That is all. Fundamentally, the reason the change has been made is because there are too many people wanting rooms and too few rooms for them. Those who would prefer two rooms cannot have them. They must put up with one, and inasmuch as they must use one apartment both for day and night, a double-barrelled name results.

The need for a well-designed and furnished bed-sitting-room obviously exists in big cities, and we shall have, first of all, to eliminate the word "designed" in so far as it means architect's and builder's work. For most bed-sitting-rooms must be contrived in existing houses which were not originally intended to include rooms to be used for the two purposes. Architects' plans do not contain rooms marked "bed-sitting-room." The problem of compromise rests with the furnisher.

Historically, however, the room has some claim to consideration, for it was usual for the bed to be accommodated in parlours in the sixteenth century. The "Great Chamber" of Tudor times was, to all intents and purposes, a bed-sitting-room. Many inventories exist which show this. One may be quoted, that of Sir Thomas Barrington, of Hatfield Priory (a house long since demolished). The "Dyninge Chamber" had a "standing bed, trundle bed" (which went underneath the other in the daytime), "side-table, and court cupboard," as well as a table, chairs and stools. The "day-bed" of Stuart origin plainly says that it was a piece of furniture for the bed-sitting-room. Evidently the need still existed in the eighteenth century, for Heppelwhite summarily

dismisses the "press-bed" as a rather common combination of wardrobe and tester bed. This combination still exists in modern furniture, and the last hundred-and-fifty years do not appear to have shown much improvement in it.

Now there is one main consideration in the making of a bed-sitting-room, and that is space. If you put in your room the whole of the furniture of a conventional sitting-room and the whole of a bedroom suite with bed, there will be no room for the occu-

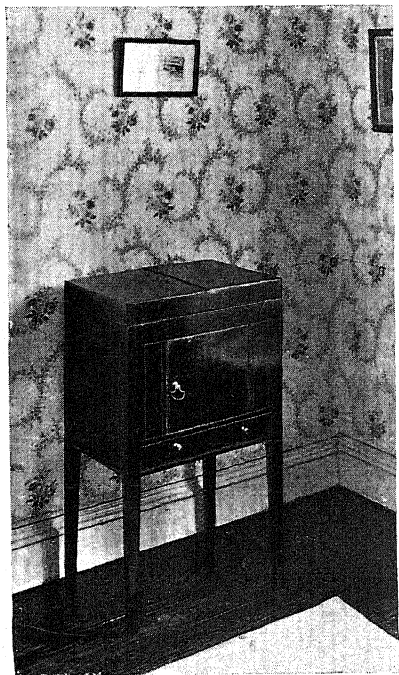


THE DIVAN SERVES AS A COUCH BY DAY AND A BED BY NIGHT.

pants. Certain things must be dispensed with. What are you going to leave out? First, the washstand must go, if possible; and it can go if a bathroom and lavatory be available. Then the wardrobe must go, for it takes up a lot of space, and it is quite easy to put up pegs in a corner of the room or in a recess, with a curtain to screen the unsightly effect of hanging clothes. But it is essential to have something to put clothes and bed-linen in, and that will be the chest of drawers. In all probability it will be found convenient

to make the top of the chest of drawers the dressing-table, and to save space here it is well to hang a small mirror on the wall instead of putting a standing looking-glass on the top of the chest. Combination pieces of furniture are to be had, called dressing-chests, on which a swing mirror—sometimes with side wings—is fixed. But the mirror hanging on the wall is simpler, and it gives more accommodation, because the dressing-chest is usually lower than the chest of drawers, and the drawers themselves are neither so many nor so deep. On the other hand, it is certainly more convenient to sit at a dressing-chest than to stand at a chest of drawers.

The bed itself cannot project into the room from the centre of a wall, again because of lack of space. It must be placed



Closed, with all the necessary equipment out of sight.

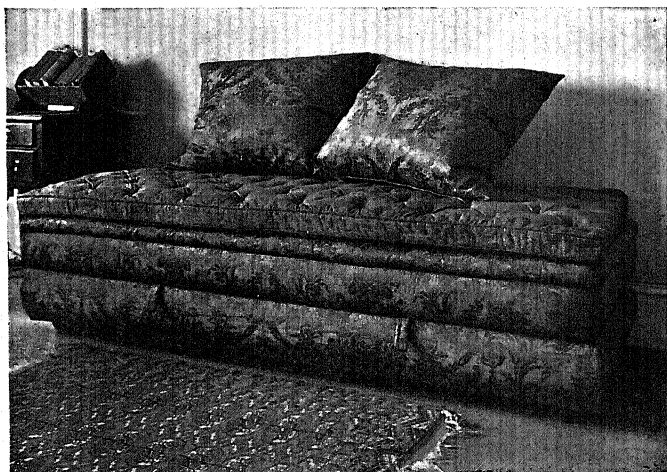


Open as a washstand, with mirror raised.

A PIECE OF FURNITURE ADMIRABLY SUITED TO THE BED-SITTING-ROOM.

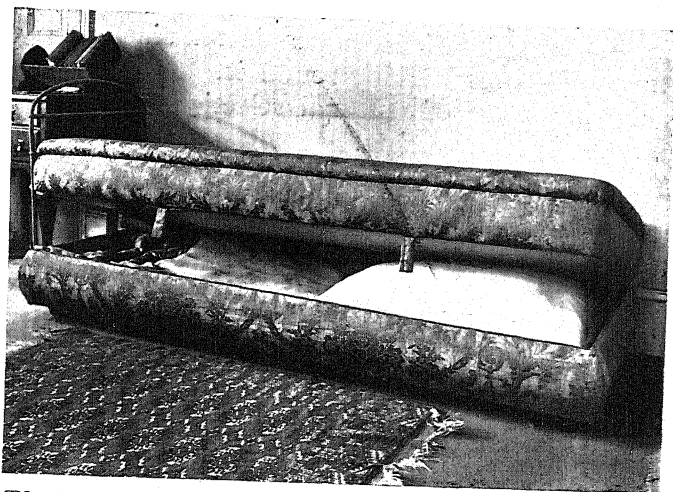
sideways, and when it is sideways it is more difficult to make it. One cannot get to the far side without moving the bedstead round on its castors. It is suggested that a bed for a bed-sitting-room should be narrow, and it is not contemplated that more than one person shall sleep in it. Bedsteads are made in stock widths. A double bed is never less than 4 feet wide. In English makes it is usually 4 feet 6 inches. A single bed is never less than 2 feet 6 inches—more usually 3 feet. For the bed-sitting-room the bed must be the narrow one: but the best solution is to have a divan like that shown on page 78 or the specially constructed divan-bed illustrated below and on the page opposite. This type is designed to accommodate the bed-clothes when used as a divan in the daytime, and it is a very simple matter to transform it into a bed by night.

A table is a necessity in the bed-sitting-room. It should be of the flap-table type, so that it can be easily moved from the centre and put near the wall, if required. It must be admitted, however, that the oblong table of the conventional dining-room and kitchen is on the whole more serviceable. It is steadier on its legs, and of course is much more spacious



THE DIVAN-BED.

This is its normal appearance as a divan.



The bottom portion consists of a hinged box, and in this the bedclothes are kept and the iron head-frame is turned.

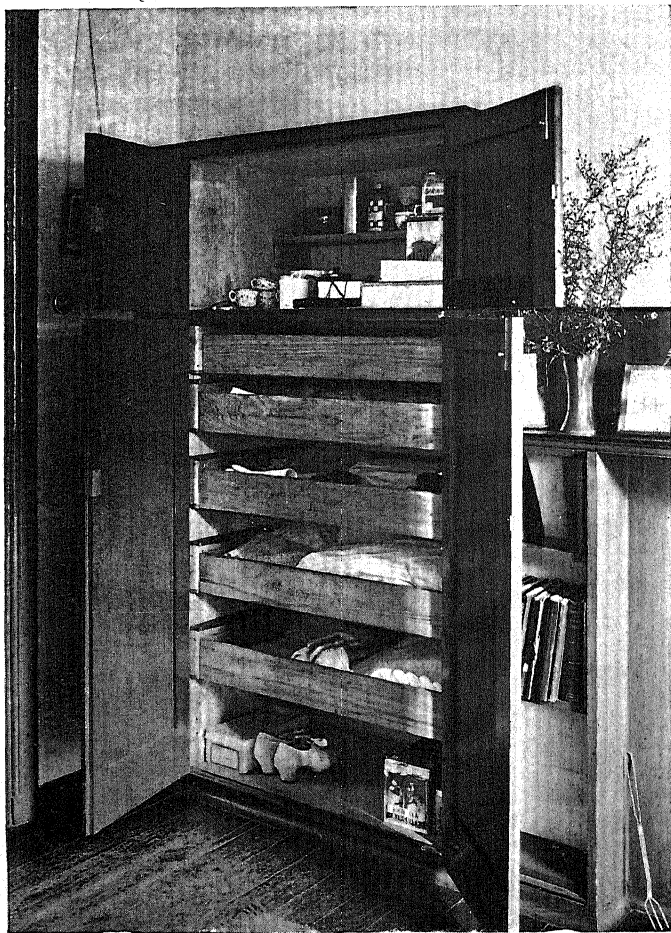


This shows the bed made up. It is as comfortable as any bed could be, being roomy and well sprung.

THE DIVAN-BED.

on top. But it is, practically, an uncompromising fixture. Once settled in the middle of the room it remains there and the occupants are for ever walking round it.

Chairs are a matter of personal selection, though one easy chair is a necessity for comfort.



A HANDY ARRANGEMENT OF CUPBOARDS FOR A BED-SITTING-ROOM.

The lower cupboard has sliding shelves for clothes, while in the upper cupboard is space for stores.

Chapter VII

THE SPARE ROOM

IN a bygone age, when visits lasted for anything from six weeks to three months, the guest chamber was a place of importance. It was, indeed, one of the best rooms in the house, being properly regarded as the guest's temporary home. Now things are different. For a visit of a few days a guest does not require a very large room, but certainly it should be cheerful. A bold scheme of colouring, something that will be at once welcoming and restful, is the first requisite. The spare room is essentially a room in which it is not necessary to consider whether one would soon get tired of the wall treatment, for no one will be in it long enough to become weary of it.

But for even the most fleeting visit two or three things are necessary if the guest is to be comfortable. The first is space to put things away. Do not make the mistake of imagining because the visit is only for three days that the guest has brought no clothes and does not need drawers and cupboard accommodation.

Who does not know the discomfort of a bedroom that is used as a family lumber-room? The newly arrived guest opens the wardrobe to hang up her dresses (or coats, if our guest is a man) and finds the space already full of clothes. And it must be counted as lucky if there are two empty drawers. The lady's hats must stay in her hat-box, for lack of other accommodation; and her whole visit will be more like being in a ship's cabin than anything else, not because her room is small, but because it is full, and she has to live in her boxes.

Then the guest needs privacy. It is extremely disturbing and disagreeable, when you have retired to your own room, to have someone suddenly bursting in without even the preliminary courtesy of a knock. There is a recoil, then a perfunctory apology: "I am so sorry. I just want to get something out of

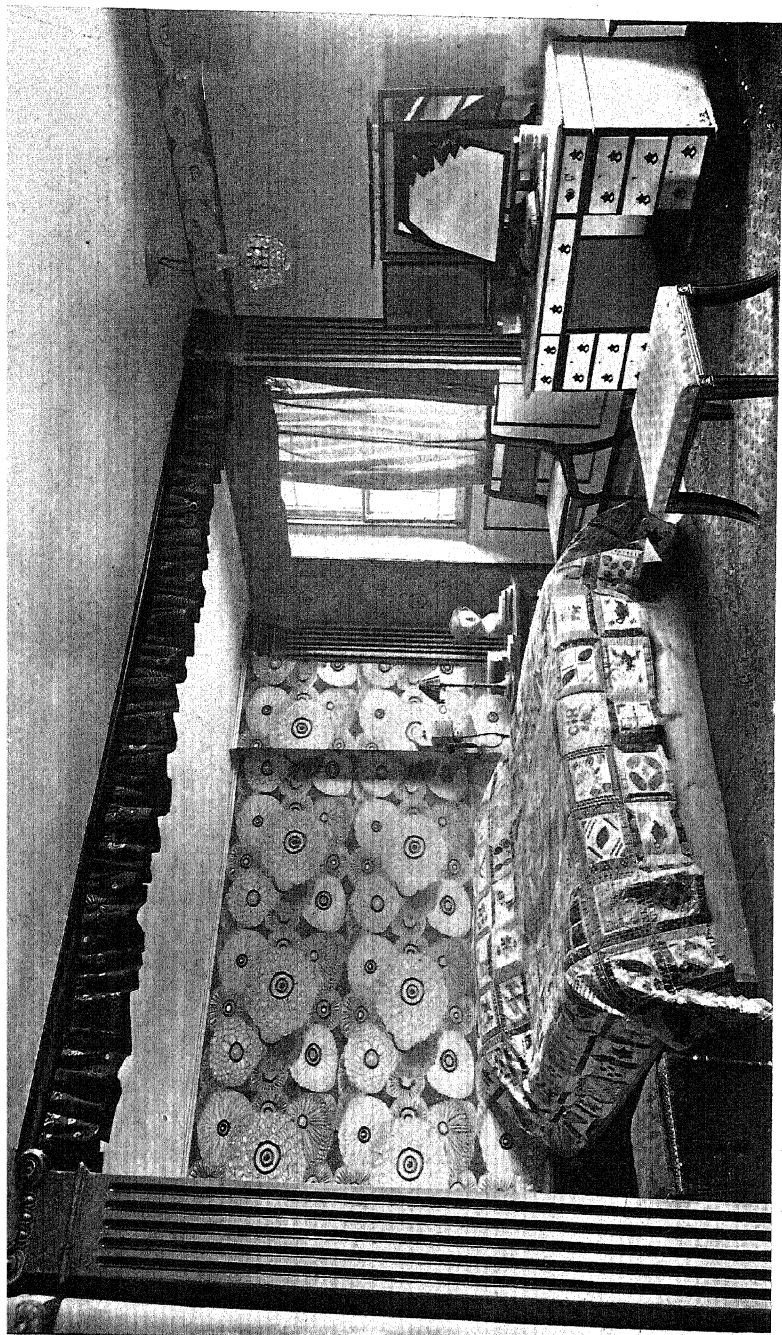
the wardrobe." They leave the door wide open while they go to the wardrobe—*your* wardrobe for the time being—and rummage about in it to the detriment of your clothes. Finally something is dragged out; they slam the wardrobe door, shutting your most perishable skirt (or best coat) in it, and go away, leaving you to your reflections.

Then do not have a spare room that has to be carefully watched and cosseted lest it should spoil. A certain guest fled from a chilly north drawing-room to her own south bedroom to write letters. The blind was down, and the room as depressing as a funeral. She pulled the blind up, letting in a flood of beautiful sunshine in which she basked, enjoying the warmth and cheerfulness as she settled down to her letters. Then there was a gentle knock at the door and her hostess came in. "My dear, do you mind if I pull down your blind? It fades the carpet so if it is up, and these south rooms are so dreadfully sunny. Would you like to write in the drawing-room? You will find it quite quiet there." And cold and dreary and sunless!

How much better to have furnished the spare room with a carpet of neutral tint that did not fade, or to have polished boards, and one or two brightly coloured rugs that could be put out of reach of the sun! Then guests could enjoy the sun in peace and comfort.

Do not omit to put a small but firm table beside the bed, to hold a clock, lights (if necessary), and the early tea tray. A big table gets in the way, and a rickety one is unsafe. Some people only put a chair, which is a very poor substitute.

On the whole a good and roomy writing-table is more important in a spare room than an arm-chair or a sofa. Only elderly guests are likely to want the latter, but everyone wants the writing-table. And see that it is not cumbered with vases and trinkets. The illustration on p. 86 shows a simple treatment which meets all the requirements happily. Here we have just an odd table with a drawer, set in a good light below a window and furnished with the necessary requisites. These latter are often overlooked, with the result that the guest wishing to write a letter finds there is, perhaps, a penholder minus its nib, an ink-pot without ink, and much stationery accommodation with an entire absence of stationery.



A GAY TREATMENT OF A BEDROOM ALCOVE.

The very modern paper seen on the wall is in bright colour, and is used also as a frieze around the rest of the room above a plain wall surface. A treatment like this is particularly suited to a spare room.

So let the spare room be a room, however small, which you can entirely spare to your guests, to fill to the utmost with their own belongings.



A SIMPLE TREATMENT FOR THE WRITING-TABLE.

Chapter VIII

THE BATHROOM

FOR inspiration in house design and decoration we frequently go back to Georgian and earlier times, but in the matter of the bathroom it will avail us nothing, for there was then no cult of the bath, and although we may quite commonly find the powdering room, there is no such place as a bathroom that offers any model for us to follow in our own houses. In the days of George II., even, the idea of a bathroom would seem to have been regarded as something extraordinary, so that Celia Fiennes, finding such an unusual thing at Chatsworth, is prompted thus to describe it: "Within this is a batheing-roome, ye walls all with blew and white marble, the pavement mixd one stone white, another black, another of the Red vaned marble. The bath is one Entire marble, all white, finely veined with blew, and is made smooth. It was as deep as one's middle on the outside, and you go down steps into ye bath big enough for two people. At ye upper End are two Cocks to let in one hott water ye other Cold water to attemper it as persons please." There are to-day examples which match the foregoing, although there is a different custom in making such dual use of the bath. Many persons of ample means have carried out a fancy for a bathroom in the grand manner, elaborately appointed for exercises as well as for ablutionary purposes, but the average house-owner finds himself restricted very severely by limits of space no less than by those of cost. It is of interest, therefore, to turn to the accompanying illustrations of small bathrooms in order to see what can be done on a modest scale.

One of them, illustrated on the next page, is in an old cottage at Lingfield which has been skilfully adapted to modern uses, and it shows how the very utmost has been made of the small space. A geyser (its products of combustion taken away by a flue-pipe, as they always should be) supplies hot water to the bath

and to the lavatory basin. The walls are finished with plaster. Near the window is a round mirror having a white enamelled frame which defies all the effects of steam, and similarly well suited to its purpose is the glass shelf with glass towel rail below. Instead of a chair, for which there is no space in this bathroom, a stool is used, and its seat merits attention, being formed of a thick slab of cork.

The bathroom illustrated on the opposite page is more ample, though still of a size that suits the average needs. Its walls are tiled for about half their height on the side next the bath, which itself is set on a tiled base. The hot-water supply in



GOOD ARRANGEMENT IN A VERY SMALL SPACE.

this case is furnished by an independent boiler installed in the service quarters of the house, and the rail seen on the right-hand side serves as a radiator, as well as for drying and warming towels.

The third illustration is of a bathroom in a bungalow, and its particular interest is the inclusion of a built-in marble shelf

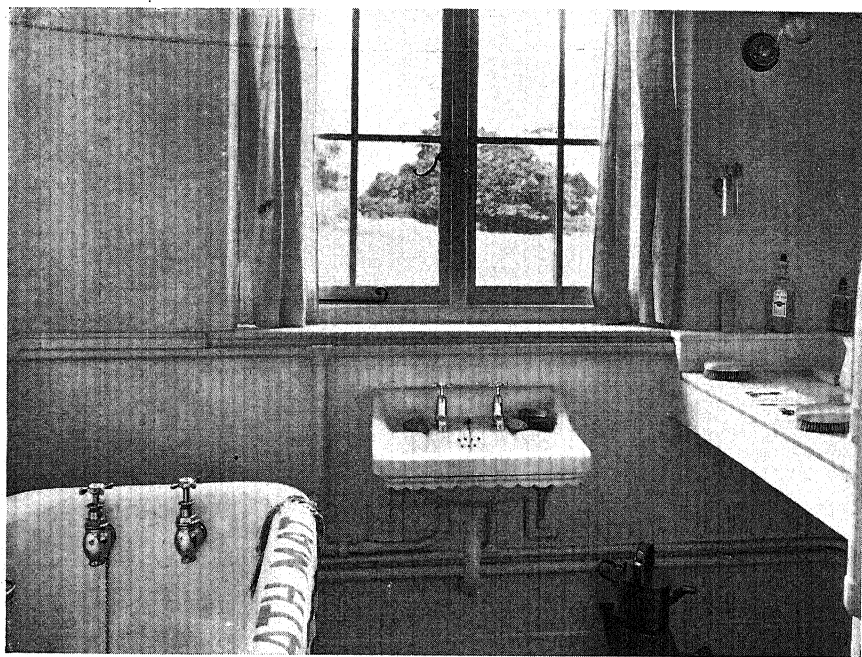


A SMALL BATHROOM CONVENIENTLY APPOINTED.

which serves as a dressing-table. This arrangement is especially useful in a house where the bathroom is used as a dressing-room.

In connection with the general treatment of bathrooms it may be noted that colour could be more often introduced than it is. Here, indeed, is a room in which one can get away from fixed ideas. The essence of cleanliness is generally believed to be

embodied solely in a pure white decorative treatment, but when the walls are white, and the white is continued in the ceiling, the effect, even when reflecting the morning sun, is apt to produce a chilling impression. By contrast, the use of bright colour will give a feeling of liveliness and warmth. Fancy can run freely in this room.



IN A BATHROOM THAT IS ALSO USED AS A DRESSING-ROOM.

The special feature here is the built-in marble shelf seen on the right.

Chapter IX

THE NURSERY

IF it is worth while to give careful thought to the arrangement, furnishing, and decoration of our bedrooms, in which we spend a third of our twenty-four hours, how much more so to the nursery, where the tiny folk spend a considerably greater portion of theirs, and at an age when their susceptibilities are so much keener than those of the grown-ups. Everything that gives greater comfort and convenience should be provided.

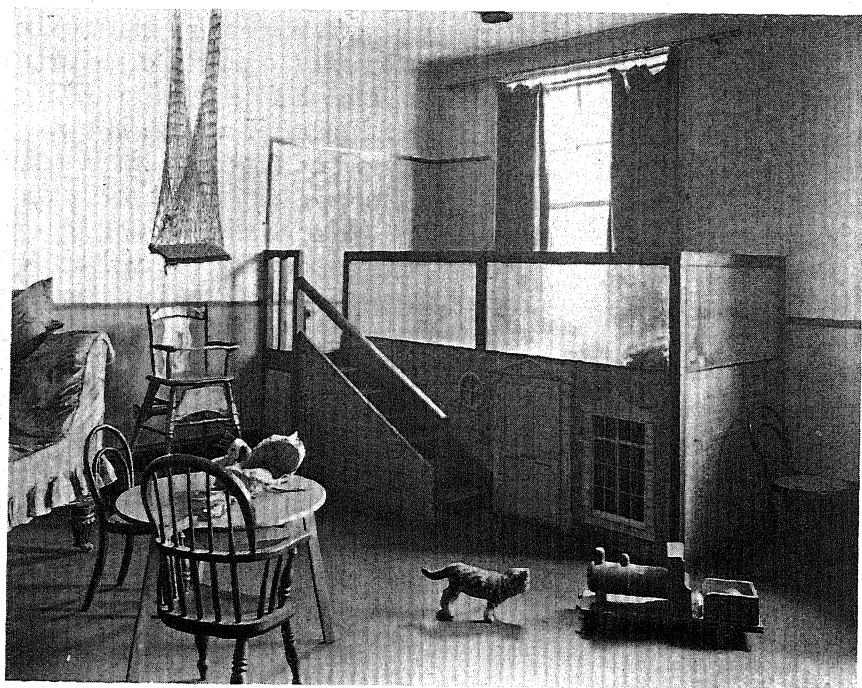
The accompanying illustrations are of value in this connection. They suggest improvements that might well be carried out.

A study of the detail photograph of the nursery mantelpiece in a Surrey house (on page 95) will reveal the neat contrivance for airing clothes or drying towels, etc., before the fire without danger. No nurse will need to be told that if a cloth is thrown over the guard to dry, and left there and forgotten, it is quite likely to be blown towards the fire and set alight from any sudden draught, such as a gust from the open window or a breeze when anyone shuts the door quickly. Yet the convenience of being able to air or dry things at the fire is very great in a nursery. In the photograph here reproduced will be seen what appears to be a second brass rim to the top of the fire-guard. It is in reality a length of brass tubing following the shape of the rim, but fixed slightly below this and held in a socket on either side, so that it can be pulled out or pushed in, as required. When a towel is to be dried, the brass tube is drawn out an inch or two and the towel hung over. The whole of the cloth, therefore, hangs *outside* the wire guard, which effectually protects it from the fire if a draught should press it that way. If nothing needs to be dried, the tube is pushed in and appears simply as a double brass top to the guard.

No doubt many nurseries rely upon the old-fashioned towel-horse, which is efficient enough, and should not be dangerous if

there is a high guard. But it is not likely to be got out and put into position for every damp cloth: hence the tendency is for the guard to be used in the ordinary careless way.

Another feature of particular value in a nursery is a glazed stoneware cupboard built into the wall. It is easily accommodated by removing a few courses of bricks from an exterior wall at a convenient height from the floor, and building in the fitment with a couple of ventilating bricks against the openings. The specific use of this handy little cupboard is for keeping milk, milk puddings, or any cooked and exposed foodstuffs in a cool and sanitary place in the nursery itself, so relieving mother and nurse of frequent journeys to the kitchen or larder. There is a wooden shelf which is loose and which does not extend flush to the front of the cupboard, so that a space for circulation of air is left when the door is closed. Moreover the two ventilators promote



A NURSERY WITH A SURE APPEAL TO THE CHILDREN.



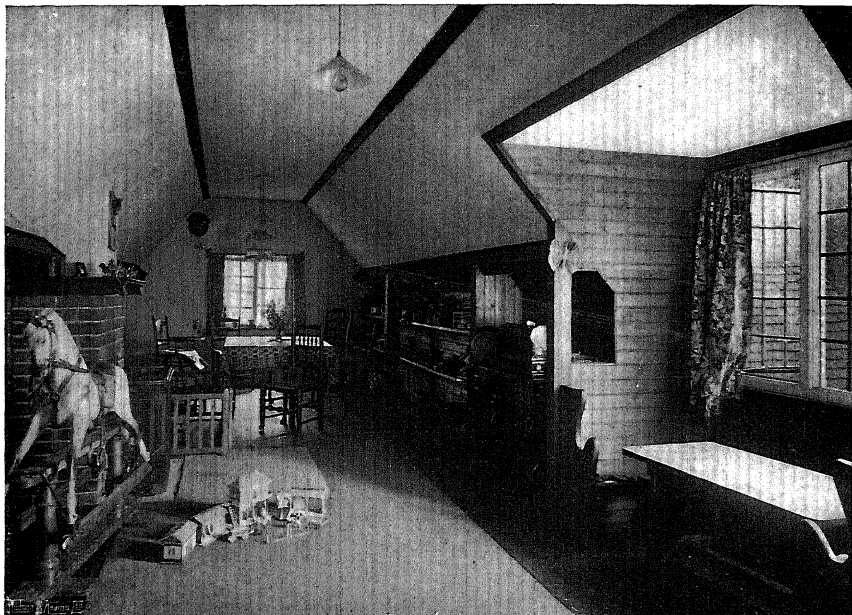
A BRIGHT CORNER IN A BLUE-AND-WHITE NURSERY.

The settee can be converted into a bed for an extra child guest at holiday-time.

a better change of air than the usual single aperture. The cupboard, of course, is easily cleanable with a damp cloth, and the glazed stoneware itself is impervious to moisture. If it becomes necessary to stand a rather tall jug or bottle in the cupboard, the shelf is slipped out for the time being. For night use, or in times of illness, and for special diets and medicine, a cupboard like this is invaluable.

Now as to the decoration of the nursery. Everyone agrees that animals are desirable. They afford entertainment, instruction, and amusement. They are simply an extension of Noah's Ark. But no gnomes and forest hobgoblins. The taste for them is really adult. Nurse has to explain that such things do not really exist, and that there is no need to be frightened at the monsters on the wall, quaint though they may be to the sophisti-

cated. But the mind of a child is entirely unsophisticated. It takes things on trust, and the trust should not be abused. A row of animals in the form of a dado-frieze is a simple and pleasing expedient. It may be noted in passing that the part of the wall which is in reach of sticky fingers should be plain, so that all possibility of colour coming off and being transferred



A NURSERY IN THE ATTIC.

The treatment of the window recess with table and benches makes for convenience at meal-times.

to the mouth is avoided. There are many washable wall coverings available, but a good plain paper is quite satisfactory.

A nursery may easily be made in the attic with a little adjustment. The idea, indeed, of having a playroom immediately under the roof is very old. Sometimes it was to be seen in Elizabethan and Jacobean houses, and in the long ones a game of bowls could be played. Indoor cricket is quite possible under these conditions.

The best floor-covering is linoleum or cork carpet, which is washable and can be completed with a few bright rugs.

The ottoman, with its box for toys and its extending ends, is a most useful piece of furniture for the nursery. It provides storage accommodation and can be converted into a temporary bed when necessary.

On the whole, the nursery should be roomy, bright, and cheerful; but much furniture is undesirable, and what there is should be quite plain and have no sharp corners or angles.



A GUARD THAT ELIMINATES ALL RISK OF THINGS CATCHING FIRE.

Note the sliding brass rail just below the top of the guard. Towels or other articles are hung on this to air or dry, and cannot blow across to the fire, as the guard comes between.

Curtains, on account of dust, should be avoided as far as possible.

It is extremely difficult for most grown-ups to enter into the mind of a child, the consequence being that things which are definitely provided for children's amusements are apt to be unappreciated by those for whom they were intended. But the element of surprise, of hide-and-seek, of something round the corner seems always to entertain children, and the little nook with low seat and table in the room where the rocking-horse appears (see illustration on page 94) is a very happy way of meeting this want. The old fashioned rocking-chair should not be forgotten for nurse, and a low shelf in the room, just out of the reach of too busy fingers, but not so high as to become neglected and dusty, is a great convenience.

Another good treatment is what may be called the toddlers' window—just a low window with a cushioned floor seat around it, and a protecting grid over the glass. A tiny child can get to such a vantage-point and look out on the great world outside.

Chapter X

THE ATTIC

ROOMS at the top of the house, close under the roof ("attics" as they are generally termed), in most houses are used either as servants' quarters or as box and lumber rooms.

They are regarded as unattractive and not worth much attention, but with taste and a little trouble an attic can be made just as comfortable to live in and just as pleasing as any other room.

You pay rent for the attic: it represents a certain annual expenditure. Why not, therefore, obtain full value for this outlay?

If family treasures (often put away and never looked at) must be stored somewhere, together with the encasing gear required to convey the family apparel for the annual holiday, then a little contriving will enable these to be kept in the attic whilst still retaining the space as an extra room.

The window will probably be small; so let the walls be light in colour. If the flooring is good, it can be stained and polished, and a few rugs will give the necessary air of comfort; or linoleum with carpet strips can be used. If cane or plain cottage furniture is adopted, the coloured grass mats that are now so popular will provide the right note of colour and brightness. And in keeping with this scheme, the window curtains can be of gay cretonne.

There is no necessity to follow any orthodox style of furnishing, as it is remarkable how oddments—perhaps spared from other overcrowded rooms—can be gathered together in an informal way that gives the place a lived-in appearance.

Wood shelving, painted or stained, will conveniently fill any corners, and the tops will provide a resting place for odd but treasured nicknacks. A bureau or tallboy has storage space for many articles, and a strongly made wood frame on short legs will, when provided with cretonne hangings and a cretonne-

covered mattress, form an inexpensive seat. Similarly, Victorian easy chairs which have fallen into disuse, either through long wear or because taste has taught the owner to like better things, can be given a new lease of life with a loose cover in the rejuvenated attic.

Attics are just as easily convertible into pleasant bedrooms, particularly if cottage bedroom furniture is used. The wardrobe, however, is not to be recommended, as it is usually too high, and a curtained recess serves the purpose equally well. A pedestal desk with glass top and a swing-mirror makes a very effective dressing-table, and a small table with a coloured rush mat behind will take the place of a washstand.

A bed without a foot-rail adds an effect of roominess, and as the bed will probably have to be placed with one side against the wall, see that the castors work easily; this helps a good deal when the bed is being "made." A bedside table or small cabinet is a welcome addition, and an easy chair will help to redeem the room from any appearance of bareness.

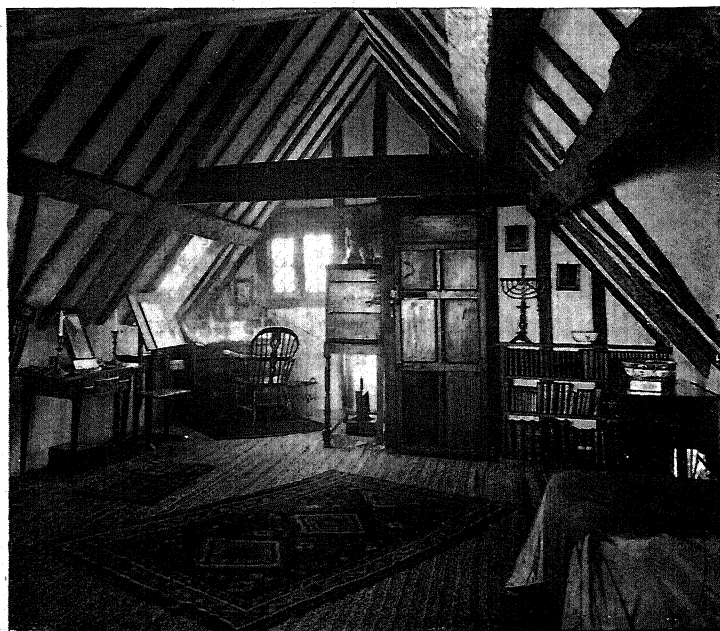
Enough has been said to indicate the possibilities in making the most of your attic rooms. When you have treated these as suggested you will wonder why you despised them for so long. You will realise that the air that comes through the attic window is not dust-laden, and that at night with shaded candles and lights the attic has a fascinating appearance, whilst on a fine evening there is the vista of the sky and the landscape without. Even if the landscape is a housetop-scape, it possesses a charm on a starry night.

The foregoing is a general outline of what may be done. By way of supplement to it may now be given some account of a specific example—in an old house at Cranbrook, in Surrey, which came into the possession of Mr. Temple Thurston, the novelist. The house had been sadly misused by unappreciative farmer tenants in Victorian times, but behind its flowery wallpapers and lath and plaster partitions was disclosed a structure of great interest and antiquity.

Coming into the possession of all this, the removal of the later disfigurements was carefully effected, without mutilating the old structure or destroying the historic evidence of the past.

In restoring the rooms to their original proportions the actual number was reduced and the accommodation ceased to be sufficient. Further accommodation for servants' bedrooms had to be provided, and, particularly, a workroom sufficiently retired and inaccessible to ensure seclusion.

Exploration of the house led to the discovery of the great unused space in the roof, inhabited by nothing but bats, spiders,



AN ATTIC FURNISHED AS A BED-WORKROOM.

rats and their kin, but full of great oak timbers still sound at heart. Here was room enough for three servants' bedrooms, a bathroom and a "sky parlour"—the garret beloved of the literary man.

The first problem was how to approach this "sky parlour." Fortunately a wide landing gave opportunity for the introduction of a spiral oak staircase; this, with a door at the head (shown in the illustration above), formed an attractive feature on the landing, and only slightly reduced the ample proportions of the space.

The lighting was the next problem. This was solved by the introduction of a long low window in the gable end, revealing the whole Weald of Kent stretching south and east, the gable being restored to its original half-timber, replacing shabby plaster and deal of a previous generation.

The little window seen beside the fireplace is tucked into the end gable of the house to provide the writer with both a seat and a view of his garden, while, should he desire to work at his desk, a two-light dormer was thrown out at the other end of the room. These windows, with oak frames moulded to a section similar to those existing elsewhere in the house, and the dormer covered with old tiles and hipped back in the Kentish fashion, brought all into harmony with the old house and made the new work practically indistinguishable from the old.

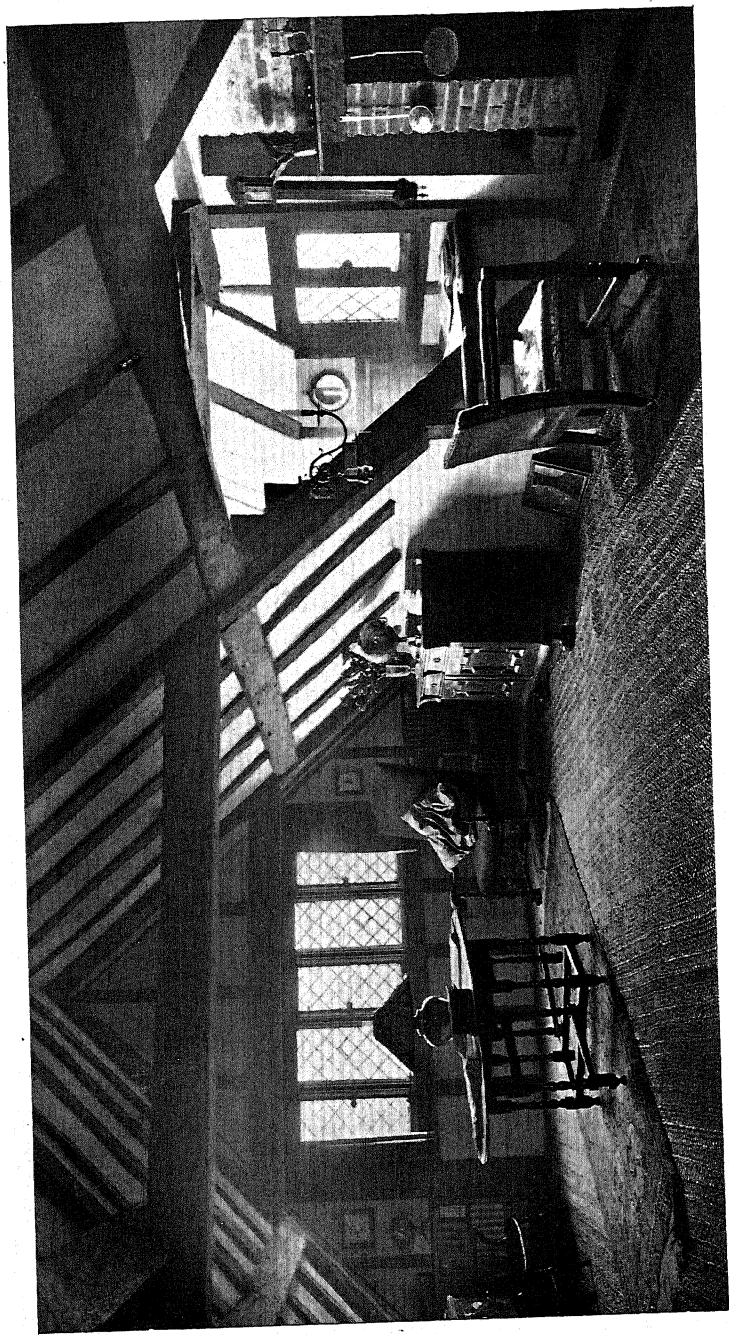
The oak joists were boarded, and matting was laid over the entire floor. The roof was battened and lathed under the tiles so as to leave the timbers exposed, and plastered with a hand "float"—to the great reluctance of the plasterer, who could hardly be persuaded not to leave a perfectly flat surface.

The place is quite cool in summer and warm in winter, and does much to upset the generally accepted idea that such a room in the roof must be subject to great variations in temperature.

A further example of the possibilities of the attic is seen in the illustration on page 102—this time in the centre of London. It is on the top floor of one of the old houses in Lincoln's Inn, and shows how attractive a little room of this kind can be when furnished with such appropriate pieces as are here seen. Particularly to be noted is the treatment of the walls and ceiling, both of which are painted a delightful tone of sunset yellow. This makes the whole room aglow.

There is a window at one end of the room and a door at the opposite end, and it is thus a very easy matter to open both on occasion, and so to freshen the air in the room in a few minutes. A fireplace comes in the centre of one of the long sides of the room, and this, with deep-sprung upholstered chairs and the floor covered with a rug of restful tone, provides the fullest possible comfort.

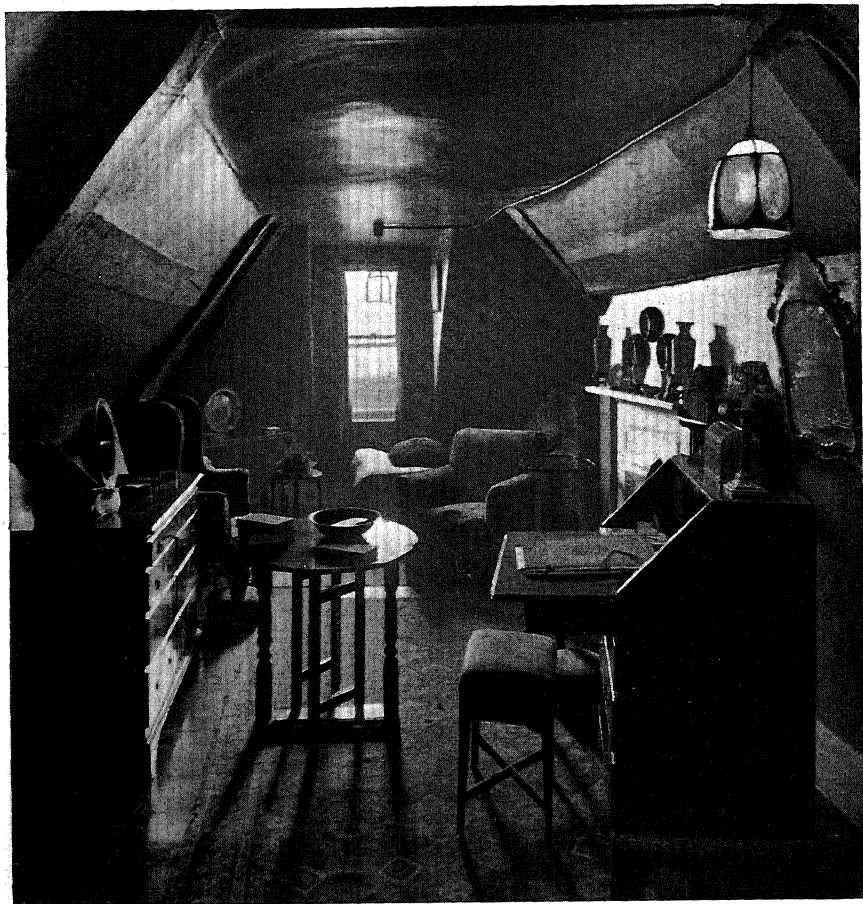
A bureau, chest of drawers, one or two tables, and a couch-bed constitute the furniture, and thus equipped the place serves



THE EYRE OF AN AUTHOR.

This pleasant room has been made in the roof space of an old farmhouse at Cranbrook, in Kent. The timbers are the ancient timbers, otherwise the room is entirely a reconstruction. The roof is lathed and plastered inside, and in this way the space is kept cool in summer and warm in winter. The floor is covered with matting, and suitable pieces of old furniture give the place the right atmosphere. The long low window at the end is new, fashioned in oak in the traditional Kentish way.

admirably as a bed-sitting-room. It is essentially a man's room with a workaday air about it, but possessing withal, in an unaffected way, those characteristics of good taste that are evidenced by the discerning selection of the pleasant old pieces of furniture and the ornaments, few but good.



OVERLOOKING A LONDON SQUARE.

Contrived in the roof space of an old building in Lincoln's Inn, this attic room has walls and ceiling glowing with the colour of sunset yellow. There is a feeling of cosiness and intimacy about the whole setting.

Chapter XI

SERVANTS' BEDROOMS

THE idea that anything will do in servants' bedrooms is no longer countenanced. It is now generally recognised that not only have servants a claim to proper accommodation, but even from the economical point of view it is good policy to make their rooms comfortable; just as in factory life it is now common practice to promote healthier and happier conditions of work. Turning, however, from the general to the particular, and taking the matter of the floor first, it is suggested that nothing is more serviceable than linoleum for covering a servant's bedroom. It is most hygienic, and with the addition of a few rugs all sense of bareness is eliminated and a feeling of comfort attained. Cork lino, though more expensive than the ordinary variety, has the special merit of being warmer to the foot, and where it can be afforded its use is to be commended.

In the treatment of the walls and curtains the aim should be to secure an air of brightness and colour, and in considering this matter it should be borne in mind that the notion that drab colours "wear better" is quite a mistaken one. They wear no better than bright colours, and are certainly dispiriting to live with.

Of particular importance is the bed, though even yet this does not receive the attention it should. It is just as important that the servant should have a really comfortable bed as anyone else in the household, and therefore it is quite wrong to provide the cheapest of all cheap forms, both as to bed and bedding.

For the furniture, one cannot have anything more serviceable and economical in initial cost than painted and grained furniture. This, of course, immediately conjures up a picture of that peculiarly desolate ochre colour which commonly distinguishes servants' bedroom suites, but it is not the graining that is wrong, it is the colour, and one may note with satisfaction that this is now being

appreciated by furniture manufacturers, some of whom supply simple bedroom furniture painted and grained in pleasant colours. Moreover, this graining is no longer that rather foolish imitation of natural woods which formerly prevailed, but simple combing of one colour over another, sometimes in straight lines, sometimes a combination of these with wavy lines: a multitude of patterns being thus produced. The chief virtue of graining is that it does not show the marks of everyday wear, as compared with a plain painted surface, and with the modern development of combing a wide range of pleasing and enlivening effects is produced.

Servants' bedrooms are generally of small dimensions, and often a wardrobe is inconveniently big. A substitute for it can be a curtained recess, but it is very necessary to see that this is well covered in at the top and so curtained that the dust is kept out. It is a good plan to put a shelf across about 12 inches from the floor. This not only provides a handy place where boots and shoes can be kept, but also it forms a sort of false bottom to the recess, and helps considerably in keeping dust away from the clothes that are hanging there. It is also a good plan, and one much appreciated by servants, to have a couple of stout boxes in which hats and other similar things can be kept. If these boxes are covered with cretonne, they are not unsightly on a shelf or anywhere else in the room.

Chapter XII

THE KITCHEN

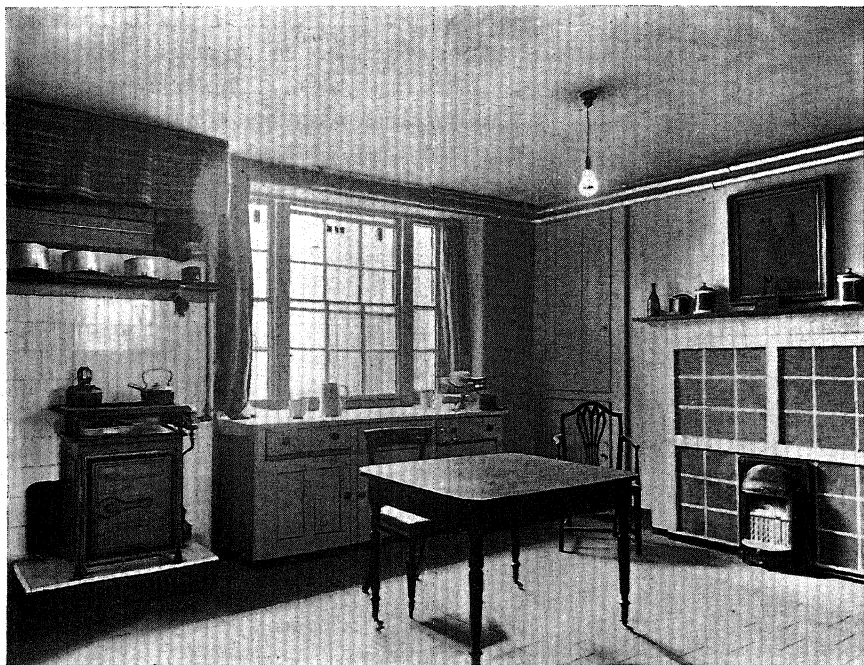
MODERN equipment should be the outstanding feature of the kitchen, but as this book deals only with furnishing the rooms of the house, no attempt is made here to embrace its working side. This being so, there remain only a few things about the kitchen for consideration.

The finish of the floor is an all-important matter, and one about which there is a good deal of difference of opinion. Tiles—red “quarries”—are commonly regarded as the best finish for the kitchen floor, but they are not particularly easy to clean, and, to use the cook’s phrase, they are “bad for the feet.” This



A SMALL KITCHEN CONVENIENTLY APPOINTED.

unyielding floor surface is certainly tiring to walk upon for any length of time. Some mitigation, however, of the effect can be secured by the use of strips of fibre matting. The claims of composition floorings are put forward especially in respect to the kitchen, as they are jointless, and the angles can be swept up in a curve, so that there is no lodgment for dust. Moreover, there is a certain resilience which makes this kind of floor less tiring than

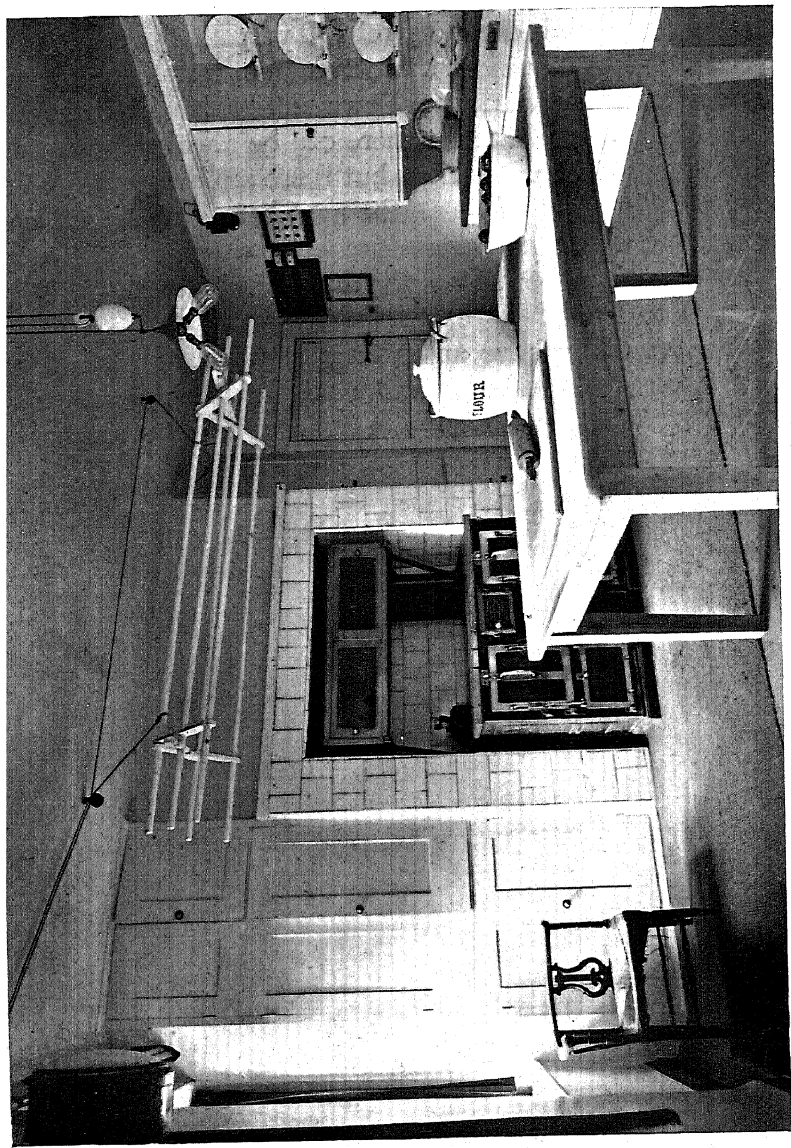


A REMODELLED KITCHEN IN AN OLD HOUSE.

Where the aim has been to secure some feeling of comfort.

a tiled floor. But some composition floors suffer from the defect that they do not wear well, and it is very necessary to secure one which the makers guarantee.

Linoleum, either plain or inlaid, gives satisfactory results in the kitchen. One particular variety simulates the effect of an old red tile floor, and this combines the advantages of linoleum with the pleasing appearance of tiles; but it cannot be too strongly



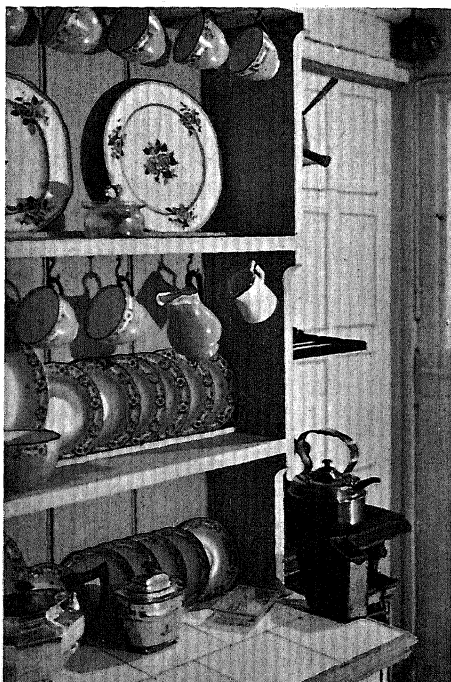
A WHITE KITCHEN.

With painted walls and ceiling, anthracite range in glazed tile recess, and red tile floor.

emphasised that a boarded floor at ground level (if there is no ventilation underneath) must not be tight-covered to the skirting with linoleum. If this is done, dry rot will very likely occur. In the case of a new house, however, a concrete floor may be put in and the linoleum or cork carpet stuck down on to this with mastic.

For the walls of the kitchen there can be nothing better than glazed bricks or glazed white tiles, but these are both costly at the present time. In place of them, the next best surface is Keene's cement painted with a washable enamel or oil paint, and it is a good plan to paint the ceiling (instead of whitewashing it) as well as the walls.

Kitchens generally have an easterly or northerly aspect, and in these circumstances one may well use a pleasant tone of yellow. The woodwork can be painted white or some bright strong colour—not the usual muddy brown or ochre.



Chapter XIII

THE GARDEN ROOM

THOUGH in this country we do not have the wealth of summer sunlight which some other countries enjoy, it is surprising that more is not made of the garden room in English houses, for it can be most attractive. There is the possibility of adapting an existing room to serve as a garden room where no such feature as a loggia exists. Naturally, it must be next to the garden, and this very fact governs the whole treatment of it. It is not a room to be regarded for just what it contains, but more particularly in relation to its garden surroundings. In a way, it is part of the garden rather than part of the house. Essentially it is a sort of outdoor living-room, and its furnishings should be in keeping with this use.

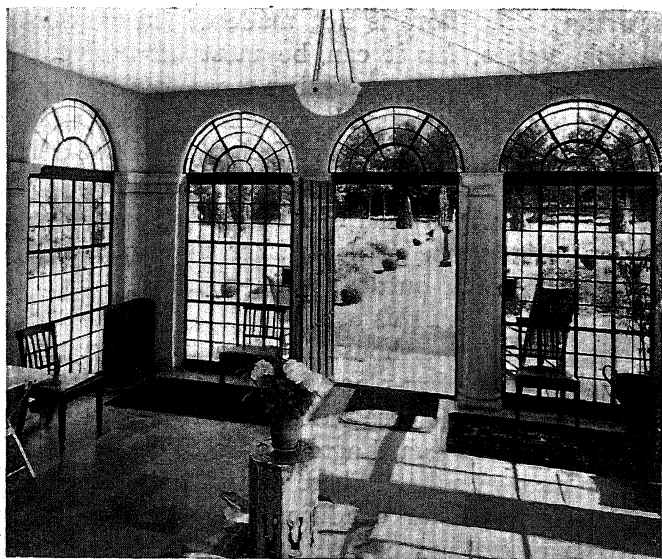
A verandah or summer-house is often made unattractive by being used as the dumping-place for any old furniture which is regarded as too shabby for use indoors. In the garden room it is necessary to be on one's guard against this; it is a room well worth furnishing for its own sake. There is available a wide choice of furniture suited to open-air conditions, not only old pieces, such as rush-bottom chairs and oak settles, but also the comfortable cane chairs of modern manufacture; and admirably suited for use with these are bright-coloured cushions and gay rush mats.

For walls and woodwork, white or cream are generally the most pleasing, as they give a clean fresh look in harmony with the green out of doors.

The garden room is one that gets a good deal of traffic from outside, and it is necessary to bear this particularly in mind when considering the floor covering. Linoleum is very suitable, particularly that variety which simulates the effect of old red floor tiles. It is possible also, with such heating facilities as radiators, to contrive the garden room for use in winter-time as well as during the summer. This is a practice which is quite common

in America, and there are examples of the same kind in our own country. One such garden room is shown below.

In furnishing and decorating a garden room it is necessary above all to observe simplicity. If such furnishings as upholstered chairs and settees, appropriate to ordinary living-rooms, are brought into a garden room, this at once loses its distinctive character. Similarly, it is necessary to be very circumspect if any pictures are introduced. The most suitable kind of pictures are those of garden

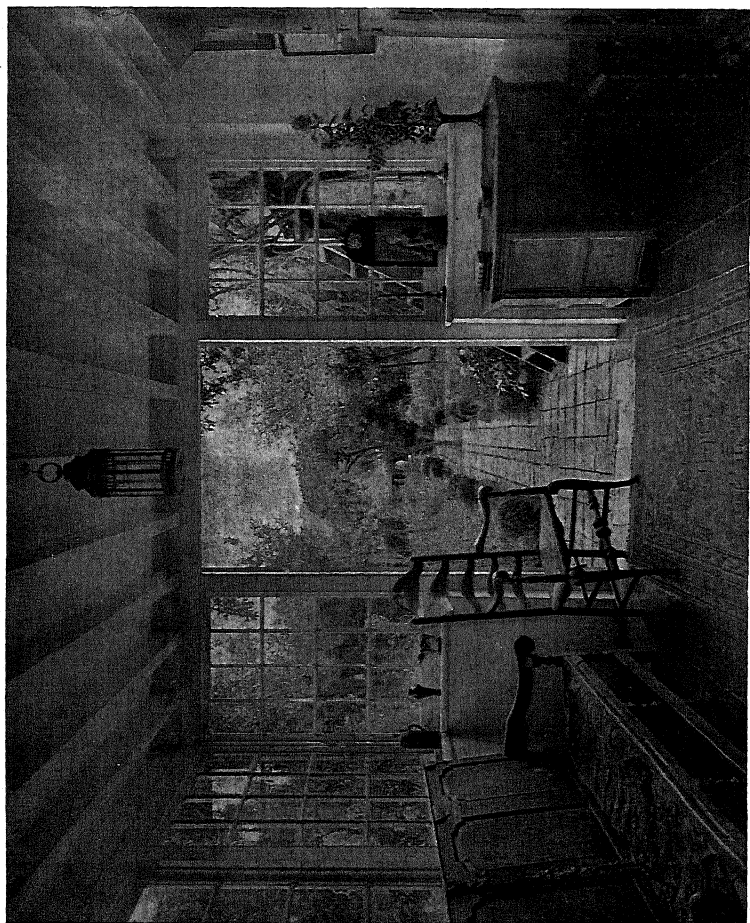


A GARDEN ROOM IN A KENT HOUSE.

With steel-framed windows that can be thrown full open on summer days, while during the winter the room is made comfortable with radiators.

or flower subjects, but even more effective in a garden room are large plaster or pottery plaques, either those of Della Robbia colouring, in blue and white, or the majolica plaques, with their variety of bright colours.

The room illustrated on the opposite page offers a very good example of furnishing appropriate to a garden room. Here all is of a simple and unaffected character, and against the plain white woodwork the forms of the furniture show to advantage. Inci-



A GARDEN ROOM SIMPLY AND APPROPRIATELY FURNISHED.

dentally may be noted the lantern that hangs from the ceiling. This is one of the little details that often make or mar a room. All too frequently a scheme is carried out with much care, and then an electric light or gas fitting of commonplace character is entirely overlooked; but, though just one of the incidentals, it is a prominent one. Lanterns are often introduced into rooms to which they are ill-suited. But to the garden room they are particularly appropriate when of such good form as that seen in the illustration on the preceding page. This room also shows the value of a garden vista in axial line with the opening from the room.



A PLAQUE OF THIS KIND IS EXACTLY SUITED TO A GARDEN ROOM.

Chapter XIV

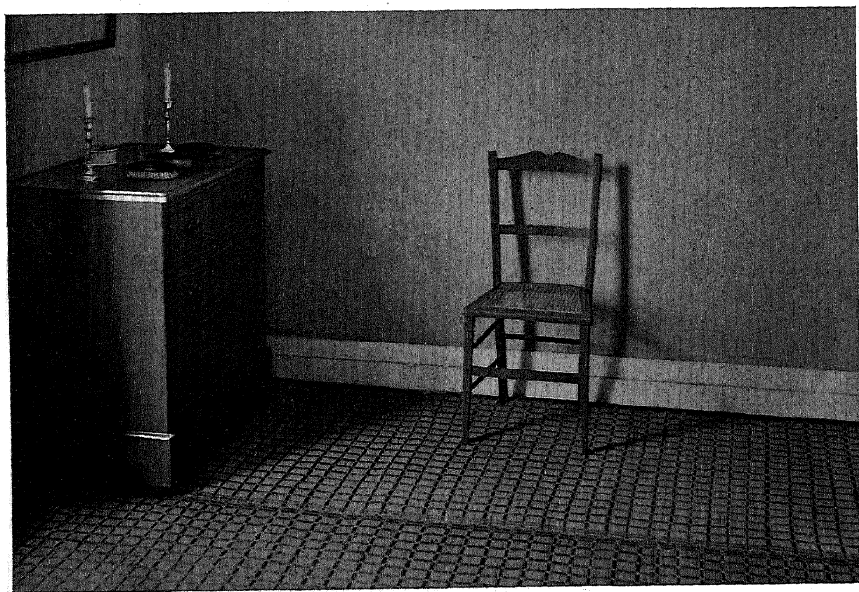
FLOOR COVERINGS

CONSIDERING the astonishing variety in which carpets can to-day be obtained, and considering what excellent designs are produced on a commercial scale, there ought to be no such things as rooms and passages disfigured by ugly carpets. Let the reader recollect what was the common style of fifty years ago, and then count himself fortunate to have a vastly better array of floor coverings within the range of even a most moderate income. And in no small measure we have to thank William Morris for the change that has been wrought. Living in a world of mid-Victorian ugliness, it was he who had the true artist's eye to perceive the beauty of the unfavoured carpet-weaving of the Orient, and the practical common-sense to put on the market carpets of his own which emulated the fine qualities of the old ones. Later designers followed the Morris model, and to-day it is possible to get excellent and reasonably cheap carpets in every conceivable style and colouring.

The happy possessor of rooms having good wooden floors can concentrate energy and expenditure on buying Oriental rugs of a quality which would otherwise be outside the realms of possibility. Without question, if the matter were pressed from a severely hygienic standpoint, the issue would rest with rugs rather than with carpets, but in the majority of cases the hiding of the floor boards altogether is a first essential, for these may be too uneven and rough to stand painting or even staining, and then it is best—in the absence of enough means to carpet over the whole space—to tight-cover the room with felt, in conjunction with which it is well to have some rugs rich in colour. The small room shown on page 115 offers an example of this manner of economical floor covering. With felt, the happiest colour to use in any room is a brown, such a brown as makes up the background of an old and faded tapestry. This will be found to blend with any rug placed on it or with any colour scheme for walls and hangings. For

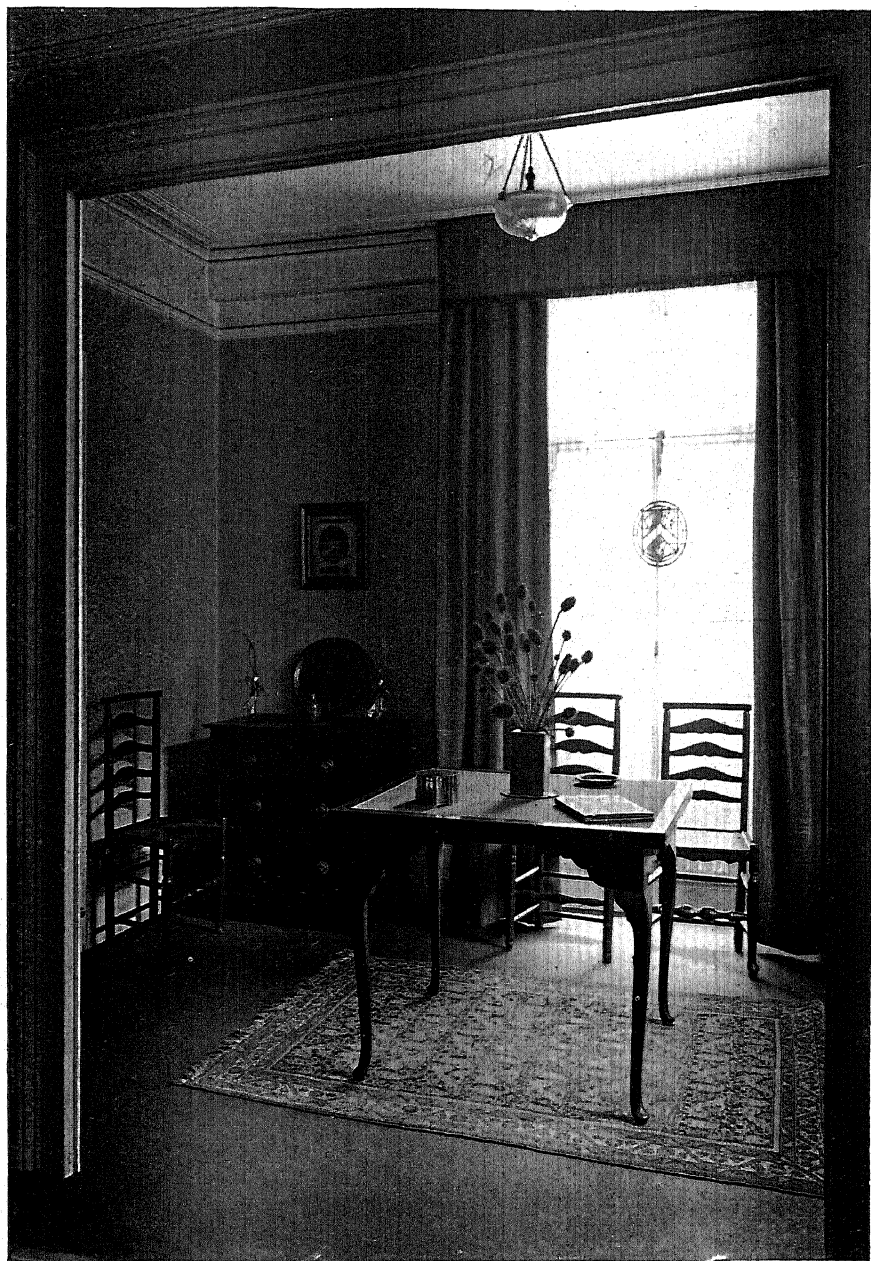
rooms with a painted or stained surround, it is well to remember that carpets woven or made into square or oblong rugs complete in design and border do not suffer from the mutilation of the pattern that occurs so displeasingly with some cut carpets. Small rooms can be made gay with an all-over carpet of stripes in the blended colourings which are woven to-day. A striped carpet, too, has the merit of ending happily on all four sides of a room, without the necessity of a border. Halls and staircases lay special claims for striped carpet, as well as for plain hair-cord carpet. Soft tones of two shades of brown, gayer mauves, a combination of blue and buff, and a carpet of the many colours of Joseph's coat, are obtainable.

Matting is also to be had in great variety, and for certain rooms of the house they are admirable. There are the close-woven Oriental mattings, some quite plain, others with chequer or other design in colour, and these are particularly suited to bedrooms, the matting being pleasant and warm to the tread. Mat-



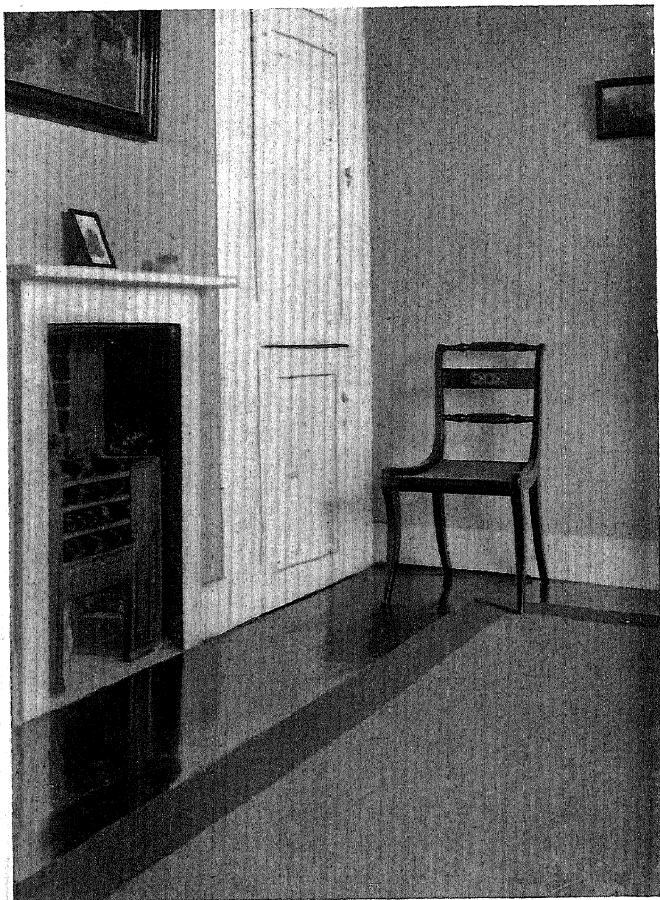
MATTING ON A BEDROOM FLOOR.

With the pattern in blue.



SHOWING A FLOOR TIGHT-COVERED WITH A DARK BROWN FELT, ON WHICH RUGS SHOW TO ADVANTAGE.

tings, of course, will not stand the everyday wear and tear that a carpet will, but certainly for spare bedrooms they are both economical and serviceable. String mattings are particularly to be commended for certain purposes; for example, on a stone floor in a kitchen or passage nothing could be better, and they are now available not only in natural colouring, but also woven in a variety of coloured patterns, many of which are very pleasing and decorative.



BEDROOM FLOOR HAVING A STRING-COLOURED CARPET WITH BORDER OF DEEPER TONE AND A SURROUND OF VARNISHED LINOLEUM.

Chapter XV

HANGINGS

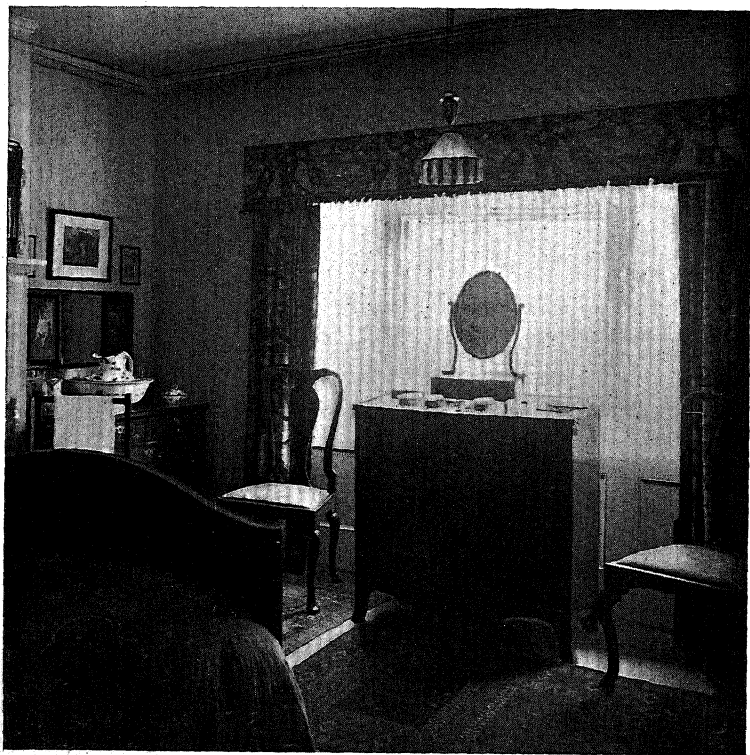
HANGINGS play a large part in the successful effect of rooms. The choice of materials is a very wide one, from heavy rich fabrics suited to a large and important room to simple bright fabrics suited to the smallest bedroom. It is essentially a personal matter as to which are selected. There are no hard-and-fast rules that one material must be used with one kind of furnishing and with no other. For example, it may be just as appropriate to have hangings of printed linen in a room furnished with mahogany as it would be to have silk hangings. The deciding factor is which fits best into the scheme, and here it may be noted that just as it is important with wall-papers to try a length in position before making the selection, so with hangings it is essential (or at least very desirable) to judge the effect in the actual room.

Cretonne offers a wealth of opportunity. Where everything is fresh and gay in a room, more vivid colours may be introduced in hangings or chair coverings than would otherwise be desirable, else the brightness of the new make the old look duller than it really is, but with such a wide range of colours and patterns as the designers and manufacturers now place before us it only needs care and good taste to produce a happy result.

Plain walls call for a patterned material, whereas when walls are themselves patterned it is generally best to use a plain material for hangings.

The colour scheme is, of course, all important, but it is very difficult to particularise, because each case has its own qualifying conditions. A few suggestions may, however, be offered. In a room, for instance, where it is desired to introduce a feeling of warmth, yellow, in its varying shades to deep orange, can be used without fear. When actually tried, it is surprising how yellow will tone with almost anything. It is especially effective with cream

or white walls. If, to take another example, the walls happen to be grey, then blue, mulberry, or petunia will be pleasing complementary colours. In an oak-panelled dining-room with old oak furniture a good effect is produced by the use of a vivid green in hangings. This is one of the cases where also a fine rich red can

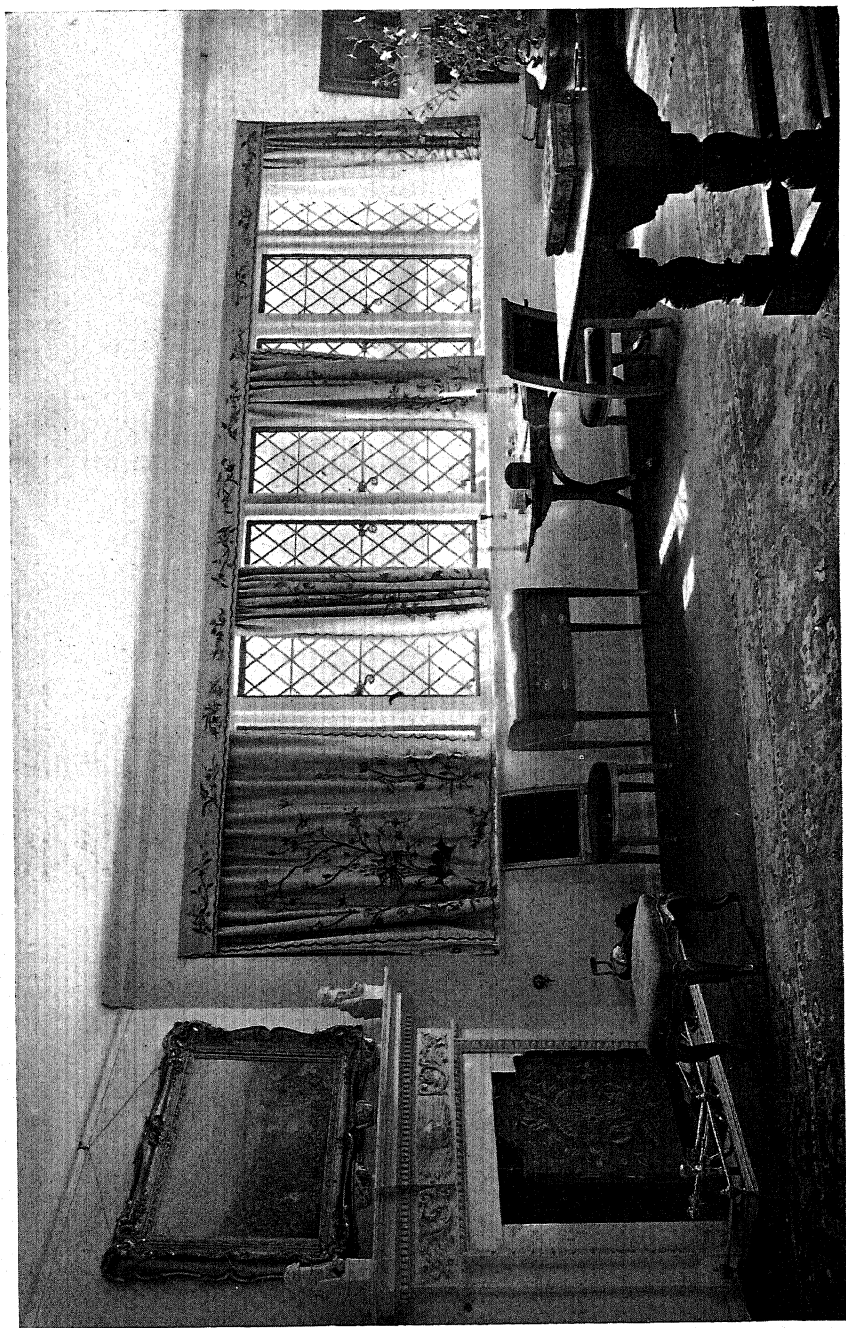


AN EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR A BEDROOM WINDOW.

The patterned curtains and straight valance are of printed linen, while close up to the window are cream net curtains.

be used. These bright colours, full of vivacity, are far preferable to the drab-patterned hangings so often seen.

An important detail is the treatment at the top of the window. Here should always be a valance, or pelmet, to hide the fittings from which the hangings are suspended, and to give a proper

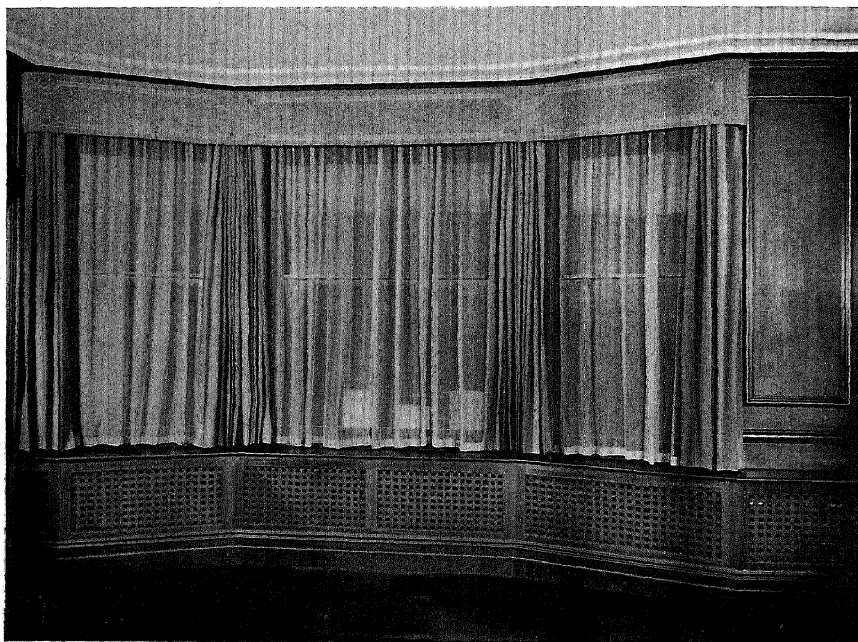


NEEDLEWORK CURTAINS IN A LIVING-ROOM WHICH IS PLEASANTLY INFORMAL.

finish at the head of the window. It is astonishing how often people are content with hangings fine in themselves but quite spoiled in effect by being left unfinished at the top, with a bare pole and rings from which the material sags in an unsightly manner.

Where an opening between two rooms is hung with curtains, there is nothing that looks so well as a double pelmet. An admirable example of this is seen in the illustration on the opposite page.

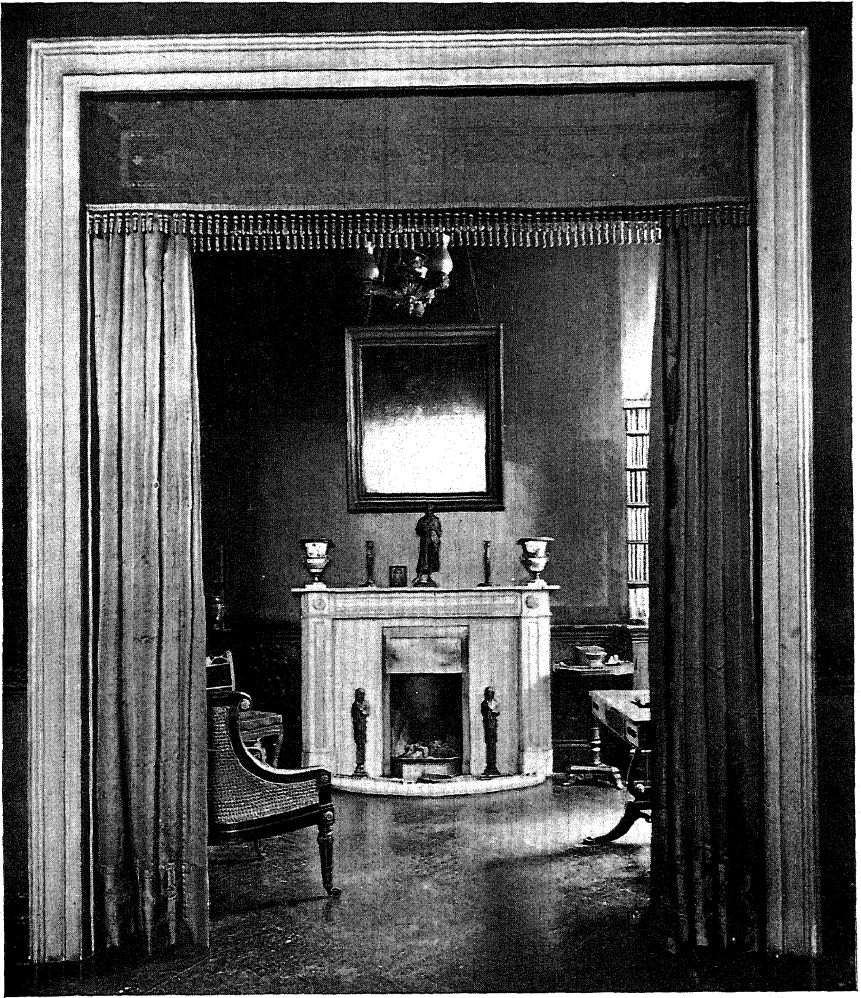
With hangings especially it is always the best economy to have good fittings, which, by their ease of manipulation, well repay the initial cost. Equally good economy is it to line, and even to interline, hangings. This adds greatly to their life. So treated, hangings will last for years and years which otherwise would



AN ARRANGEMENT OF CURTAINS THAT FOLLOW THE LINE OF A BAY WINDOW.

Coarse blue net curtains are hung close to the glass, the hangings and valance being of a deeper shade of the same blue in tassel trimmed with braid.

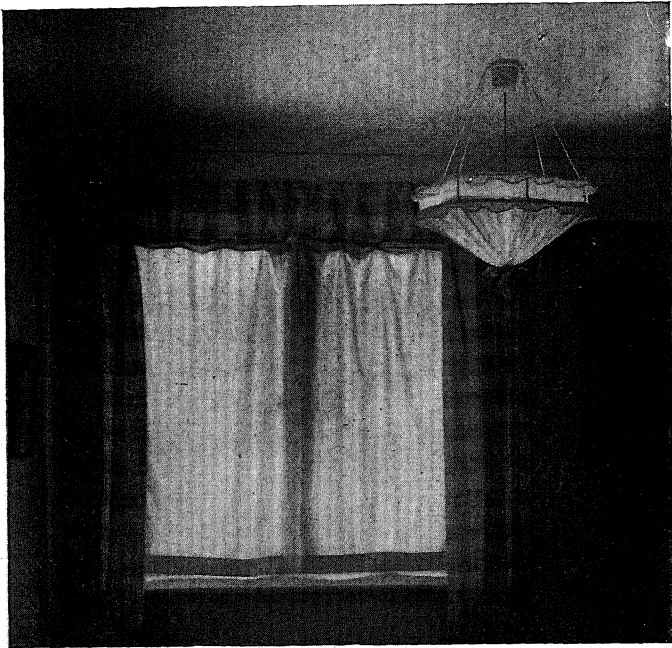
be destroyed in their very fabric by sunlight. When hangings are lined in this way it is very much the practice now to do away altogether with inside blinds.



AN EXCELLENT DEVICE.

An opening between two rooms is here hung with curtains and a double pelmet that conceals the pole. Petunia is the colour of the fabric used, with gold introduced in the fringe and trimmings.

Another point to remember is proper depth for the valance. There is a common tendency to make valances too shallow. They are then out of proportion to the length of the hangings, and so have a mean appearance. The making of a valance sufficiently deep need never interfere with the lighting of a room, for the simple reason that the valance should never come below the light-line. It can always be carried up to the necessary height above the architrave or window frame.



FOR A SMALL CASEMENT WINDOW A GATHERED VALANCE
IS PARTICULARLY SUITABLE.

Chapter XVI

MIRRORS

AMONG the accessories in house furnishing, mirrors occupy an important place.

Some people consider a hall to be incomplete without a mirror, and, apart altogether from its obvious utility, a mirror in a hall can be made into an attractive feature. A small semicircular table with a narrow glass above produces a distinct impression of arrangement, irrespective of divergent "styles." You may put a small Sheraton table in mahogany beneath a simple walnut-framed glass designed at least eighty or ninety years earlier, and the result will be very pleasant indeed. There should be no hard-and-fast rules governing such matters. Provided that attention is given to proportion and balance in arrangement, and a certain touch of simplicity guides our choice of design, success is bound to follow. Should there be a shadowed recess in the hall, a mirror can lighten it, and will help to distribute light into any dark corners. If there is a fireplace in the hall, a mirror treatment can be contrived for the overmantel, and, however much our inclinations may turn to eighteenth-century models, we must not overlook what our modern designers and craftsmen are producing: work based on the best of the past, but imbued with the spirit of our own day. Should there be a simple modern overmantel painted white, a fixture above the mantelshelf with an oval of bevelled glass set in, free from the clusters of shelves and crawling plant ornaments of mid-Victorian times—such a design is not to be passed because its lines are not based on the inspiration and genius of Adam and Marot.

If the hall has walls of plain distempered plaster, a dark-framed mirror would be most effective—a frame of dark polished wood, or one painted black; such a frame upon a light wall gives

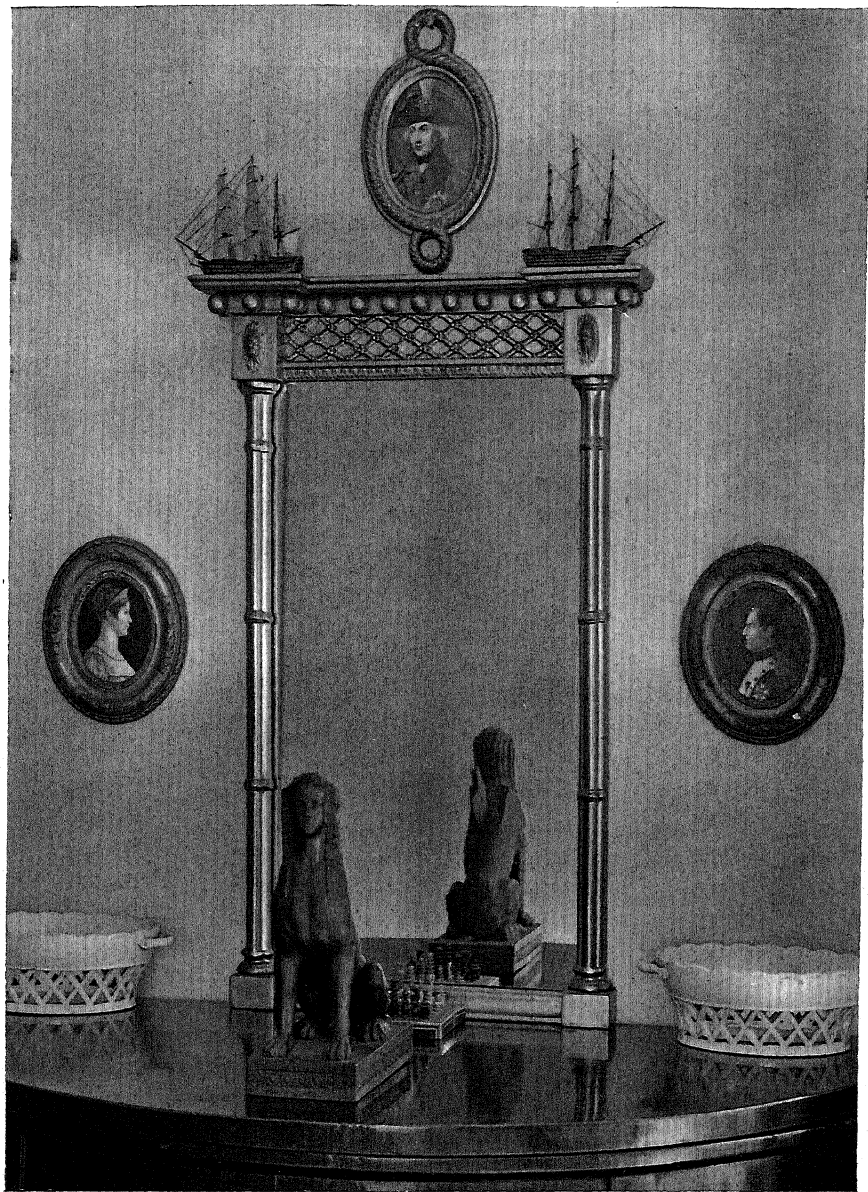
a curious quality of perspective to the glass it borders, a depth of reflection that is singularly charming. It may be some trick of light that produces this effect, but it is certainly noticeable in many rooms.

The dining-room has the next claim upon our attention. The habit of reflecting food by having a mirror at the back of the sideboard has gone the way of a good many other nineteenth-century customs. With the exception of a glass above the mantelshelf, there is indeed but little need for a mirror in the dining-room. A convex mirror is always attractive above a mantel or in a recess. Reproductions of some of the plainer designs can be obtained at no great expense, and it is not difficult to get original convex mirrors. Carved and gilded, or plainly moulded, these latter may often be picked up in an excellent state of preservation, though the more ornate designs are high-priced.

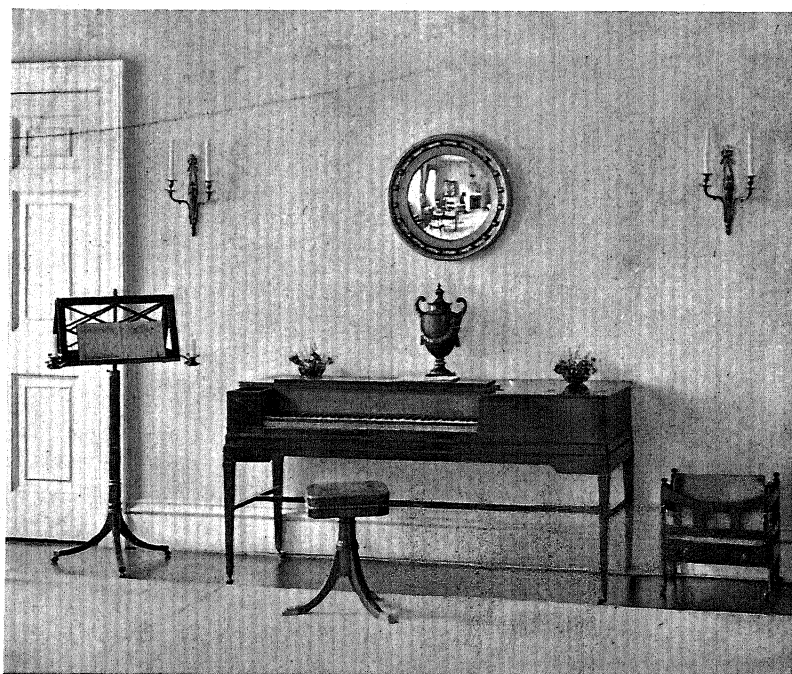
A sitting-room should have a mirror, chiefly because the play and reflection of light that comes from it lends that note of cheerful interest so essential in a room in which one spends a good deal of time. A recess can be made very attractive by the correct placing of a mirror. There can be a small bureau, and above it a glass in a broad frame, hung about nine to twelve inches above the top of the bureau; this will collect light in the recess, and give it a furnished air. Instead of a bureau there can be a table with a tall vase upon it, or a bowl of flowers; in which case the mirror should be hung low enough to make the most of the reflection of the vase and flowers, or whatever other ornament may please the fancy.

A mirror should not be hung too high in a room, nor should there be too many mirrors in one room, because the effect is worrying.

There are so many types of mirrors that may be used, from the heavily carved and gilded Georgian designs to the light, narrow-framed creations of to-day, that the range of choice is practically unlimited, and, in whatever style our rooms may be furnished, the brightening effect of a mirror is bound to assist in attaining warmth of effect and cheeriness.



Here is seen a histrionic grouping of decorative objects related to the life and achievements of Nelson. The gilt mirror is a piece of the period, and on its shelf are scale models of the "Victory," while on the table is a bronze sphinx which, with the little chessboard and men, symbolises the strategy of the two great naval and military figures of the era.



A CONVEX MIRROR ABOVE AN OLD SPINET.

table. There are many forms of toilet mirrors. Some stand alone in a frame, swinging between a pair of supporting columns with a cross-piece beneath, or they may have a base with drawers in it, and these are more useful in a small bedroom where drawer space may be limited, for although the drawers are small, their depth enables them to be of real value for the disposal of articles of toilet. Some have a flap that lets down in front and rests upon a pair of pull-out supports, rather like a miniature bureau. The frame may be of walnut, mahogany, inlaid perhaps with a line of satinwood, or it may be lacquered in black, red, green, cream, or yellow, with raised designs in the Chinese manner, gilded and lined with black. The glass itself may be oval, circular or rectangular.

The chief recommendation of the small toilet mirror is that it may be arranged upon any type of table without appearing

in the least out of place. It is simple and graceful, and so many were made during the eighteenth century that it is neither costly nor difficult to obtain original models.

Any table or chest of sufficient height is of practical use as a dressing-table when furnished with a toilet mirror. For an oak or walnut table or chest, the mirror should be in walnut or lacquer, and for a mahogany table the plainer type of Chippendale design would perhaps be more suitable; although when the choice lies between period and harmony, the latter is a sure guide to interest and charm in a room, while devotion to correct style may simply attain a formal dullness.

Perhaps the simplest way of arranging a dressing-table is to have a mirror hung at a convenient height on the wall above it, although this method does not always secure the necessary amount of light.



OLD PIECES ADAPTED TO THE USES OF THE DRESSING-TABLE.

In cupboards fitted up as wash-stands there can be a mirror, which, screwed to the inside of the cupboard door (or to the inside of a wardrobe door), may serve as a dressing-glass.

There are several ways of fixing a glass of this sort. A bead can be clipped over the edge of the glass, framing it against the door, or it may be bevelled and fastened down by four screws, one at each corner. Screws can be obtained with little threaded holes sunk in their heads which allow another slender screw with a rose head in glass or metal to be fitted into and over them. A bedroom or bathroom door may be treated quite effectively in this manner. The mirror need not necessarily be in one piece; made up in several squares it is very decorative and loses none of its utility if properly fixed, though in the case of a cupboard door the mirror should be in one piece. A solid bedroom door is more suitable for the fixing of separate squares; and as decorative effect is the primary object of this particular treatment it is obvious that on the back of a cupboard or wardrobe door (generally shut) the effect would be wasted. The cheval glass has largely been replaced in bedrooms and dressing-rooms by such devices as the mirror on the door, and the Victorian wardrobe with the mirror front is passing also.

Too many mirrors in a bedroom or a dressing-room are apt to prove a trifle trying even to the vainest, for the cross lights produced interfere with settled colour and atmosphere which an attractive room should possess.

At the same time it may be admitted that a mirror on the chimney breast will help to lighten a dark room, and with a little thoughtful arrangement can be made a charming feature in a bedroom.

Some simply-moulded frame in walnut or gilded wood lends a quiet dignity to a chimney breast, and the ideal overmantel treatment is that delightful combination, half mirror, half picture, which brings such character and finish to a room—a plain gilded frame (the mouldings may or may not be enriched) with a rectangular piece of mirror in the upper portion, and a painted panel beneath. The design is old, but reproduction is simple, and there is no reason why some print of convenient size may not be substituted for the painted panel. But the overmantel treatment



A DINING-ROOM GROUPING.
With a heavily framed mirror as the central feature.

in a bedroom should be governed only by personal inclination and the amount of light.

In the bathroom the mirror should not appear as a problem. Any simple square of looking-glass, bevelled, and pinned to the wall by the special screws already mentioned, may be used.



A MIRROR HAPPILY ARRANGED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A BUREAU.

Chapter XVII

OCCASIONAL TABLES

THE small, handy table upon which we may place articles in passing—books, newspapers, magazines, work-baskets or tobacco jars, according to our sex and inclinations—is very necessary in any room furnished for comfort. It need not take the form of the Victorian work-table, with its frilled silk basket and countless mystery drawers; nor should it become a make-shift writing-table. It is a very definite part of the furnishing scheme, though not allotted any special duty. Of course, at tea-time it is tremendously useful, but apart from this brief hour of public utility its purpose is to act as a reserve space for an emergency.

“Occasional” is an adaptable term, for any small table of any period has come to be called an “occasional table”—perhaps incorrectly from the point of view of collectors and experts—but the term is singularly descriptive, even in a craft where technicalities are uncommonly lucid.

There are all sorts of small tables that may serve as occasional tables in any room where one sits, and there should seldom be difficulty in selecting a piece that harmonises with the rest of the furniture.

There is great choice in oak tables. With one flap open, small double gate-leg tables look well against a wall, providing a graceful semicircle of polished wood on which a shallow bowl of flowers may rest; and then there are those little oak tables with turned or twisted legs and moulded underframes, and perhaps a drawer to increase their usefulness. Little fireside tables also, really like large “coffin” stools, and tables of all shapes and designs—square, rectangular, circular, an endless variety, all made in good, enduring, English oak; and oak is a wood that provides a wonderful range of rich and beautiful tones. Dignified

simplicity was the dominant note of the Oak Period, and the small tables of that past time all share that strong characteristic.

Walnut tables lack the solid air of their oaken forefathers, but a walnut table with gracefully turned legs and figured wood is always an attractive addition to a room. Lacquer tables have



AN OCCASIONAL TABLE THAT LOOKS AS THOUGH IT WERE
MEANT FOR USE.

their place also. Lacquer is useful because of its variety of clean colour, and an occasional table in dull scarlet, cream, yellow, green, or blue may bring a welcome touch of warmth to a room.

Mahogany tables are made in so many designs that the selection of a piece to match other mahogany furniture is generally

a simple matter. The tables in Chippendale's style, with flaps that may be extended when necessary by means of hinged brackets, are extremely useful.

Coffee tables are really a class by themselves. They are elegant as well as useful, whether of mahogany, lacquer, or satinwood, though they cannot serve as occasional tables.



A SEGMENTAL SIDE TABLE HAS MANY USES.

This shows it as a hall table.

Some systematic and unimaginative furnishers insist that small tables are unnecessary, and refer to them as luxuries that claim too much attention in the outlining of a plan to make a house habitable, but if we followed the doctrines of these economical sages and eliminated comfort and interest from our lives, a return to very primitive conditions might, quite logically, follow. After all, in furnishing, as in other matters, it is the small things that are often of consequence. A chair a little bit too high, or too straight, or too hard, may mean all the difference between comfort and discomfort, and the absence of a small table in an otherwise conveniently appointed room may spoil one's complete enjoyment. So a word in praise of the occasional table may very readily be spoken.

Chapter XVIII

PICTURES AND THEIR HANGING.

WHILE not being a substantial part of the furnishing of a house, pictures are particularly arresting by reason of their detached positions, and it is extremely important to choose them with great care, so that they blend with the general scheme, instead of staring starkly from the walls: and of equal importance is the proper hanging of pictures.

It is common experience to find an otherwise attractive room spoiled by having its walls covered with pictures, badly placed, crowded together, some too high, others too low, and, worst of all, with a perfect cobweb of strings and wires surmounting the whole arrangement.

No picture of whatever size or subject should be placed upon a wall in such a position that it cannot be seen and, if desired, carefully inspected without undue effort. Also, a picture should be placed in the light most suited to it. It is helpful to remember that etchings and black-and-white drawings are hung to greatest advantage in a dull light,



A PORTRAIT IN OILS WELL PLACED OVER
A DINING-ROOM MANTELPIECE.

water-colour drawings in a medium light, while oil paintings can almost always bear a full light. Every picture has its own light and shade which is the source of its vitality, and if these pictured shadows can bear their same relation to the light of the room they will become endowed with added richness.

As regards height, this can be settled best by consideration of the picture concerned, but it is almost always safe to hang at eye level.

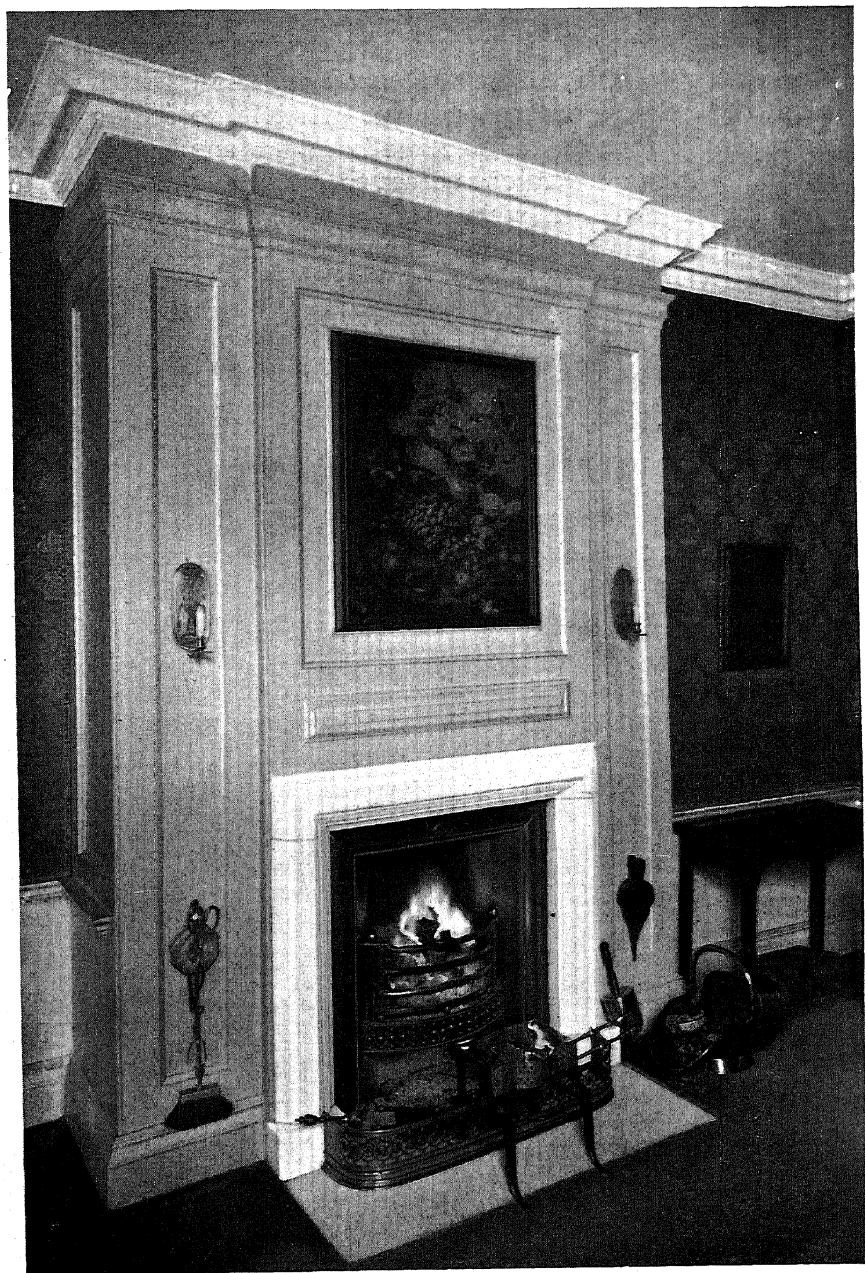
A simple way of avoiding the crowded effect so often found on the larger wall spaces of a room is to arrange the pictures in a symmetrical scheme, such a scheme having a definite relation to the wall it is to adorn. As showing this, reference may be made to the photograph reproduced on page 139.

It is not necessary to have all pictures of equal shapes and sizes so long as the inequality is not too obvious—another point to be noticed in the illustration just referred to.

Full advantage should be taken of any small spaces formed perhaps between two windows or two doors, or any feature arising out of the necessary structure of the building, such as chimney-breasts, piers, etc. These will provide opportunities for treatment individual to themselves and need not be dealt with on the same lines as the larger spaces in the room, but rather with a view to variation which will tend to avoid any sense of severity or formality.

Another valuable point which will be found of assistance in forming a scheme is to consider the positions from which the pictures will be seen. The space of wall immediately opposite the door, the portion of wall seen from outside when the door is partly open, provide opportunities for interesting and attractive arrangements. Here the relation between the proportion of wall space and the proportion of the picture is important. A high, narrow wall looks far more satisfactory with a high, narrow picture on it and perhaps a square one underneath, to check any suggestion of sameness, than a large square picture leaving much wall space above and below and little at the sides.

The actual hanging of pictures with cords offers another instance of the importance of small matters. Once the eye is drawn to these cords, it is felt that they are unsightly, and it is

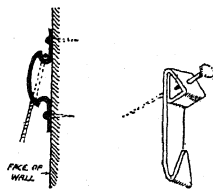


A DECORATIVE PICTURE AS PART OF A CHIMNEYPiece.

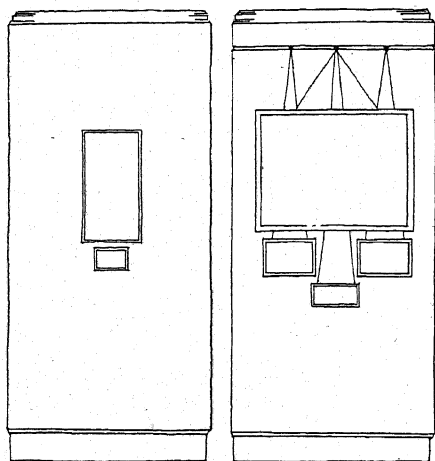
only necessary to compare two pictures, one hung with the cord exposed, the other with the cord out of sight, to see how much better the latter looks. Instead of allowing a long length of cord, a short piece is taken straight across the back of the picture, and this is hung on a nail or picture hook, the best form of which is one called the "X" hook. This has a steel pin with a brass head, and not only gives a very secure hold but also make the smallest possible puncture in the wall surface, so that it is quite a simple matter to alter the position of the hook without disfiguring the wall. Of course, if pictures are hung from a picture-rail the cords must be exposed, but the common idea that a picture-rail is the ideal arrangement may well be combated. Certainly it enables the position of pictures to be changed easily, but really there is very little in this point, because of the fact that wall surfaces fade, and consequently once a picture has been in a certain position for any length of time it will have to remain there unless a larger one is to take its place; otherwise there will be

the inevitable patch of original colour which has been preserved by being covered by the picture.

The scope of this book does not admit of any consideration of the relative merits of etchings, prints, engravings, water-colours, lithographs, and oil paintings, but special attention may be directed to the value of a framed-in picture, such as those which gave rise to the very name of "chimney-piece"—*i.e.*, a piece of painting set on the chimney-breast; and more might be done in this way both with



TWO GOOD TYPES OF
PICTURE HOLDERS.



A GOOD AND BAD ARRANGEMENT OF
PICTURES ON A NARROW PIECE OF THE
WALL.



A LIVING-ROOM WITH PICTURES FEW AND GOOD, AND THESE WELL PLACED.

Note that they are hung with the cords concealed.

modern pictures and with old ones. Also very suited to the furnishing of modern rooms are some of the coloured woodcuts which are produced by several artists of to-day. An example of the decorative picture treated as part of the chimney-piece is shown on page 137, while the illustration below is representative of the modern coloured woodcut.



A MODERN COLOURED WOODCUT.

Chapter XIX

MISCELLANEOUS FURNISHINGS

ROUND about the house there are corners and odd places which, with a little ingenuity, can be made use of and rendered attractive. Few people are fortunate enough to possess all the cupboard and shelf accommodation they would like, yet waste spaces can be utilised to meet the deficiency. Good use can be made of a recess by fitting it with shelves and enclosing the front, right to the ceiling, either with a pair of doors or with curtains.

Admittedly, there is nothing better than a bureau for writing purposes and for keeping together one's private papers and account-books, but expense sometimes precludes the purchase of a bureau either new or old, and possibly there may not be space in the room to accommodate such a piece of furniture. In such a case a substitute may be contrived in a window recess as shown by the illustration on the next page. It will be seen that on either side of the recess is fixed a pedestal with shelves for books, and in between these is another shelf, the top of which is extended by a hinged flap carried on bearers. The bearers can be made either to slide back, as in a bureau, or made to turn inwards. It will be noted that, when the flap is up, there is ample knee-hole space, while when the flap is turned down one can get at the window quite easily for cleaning or other purposes.

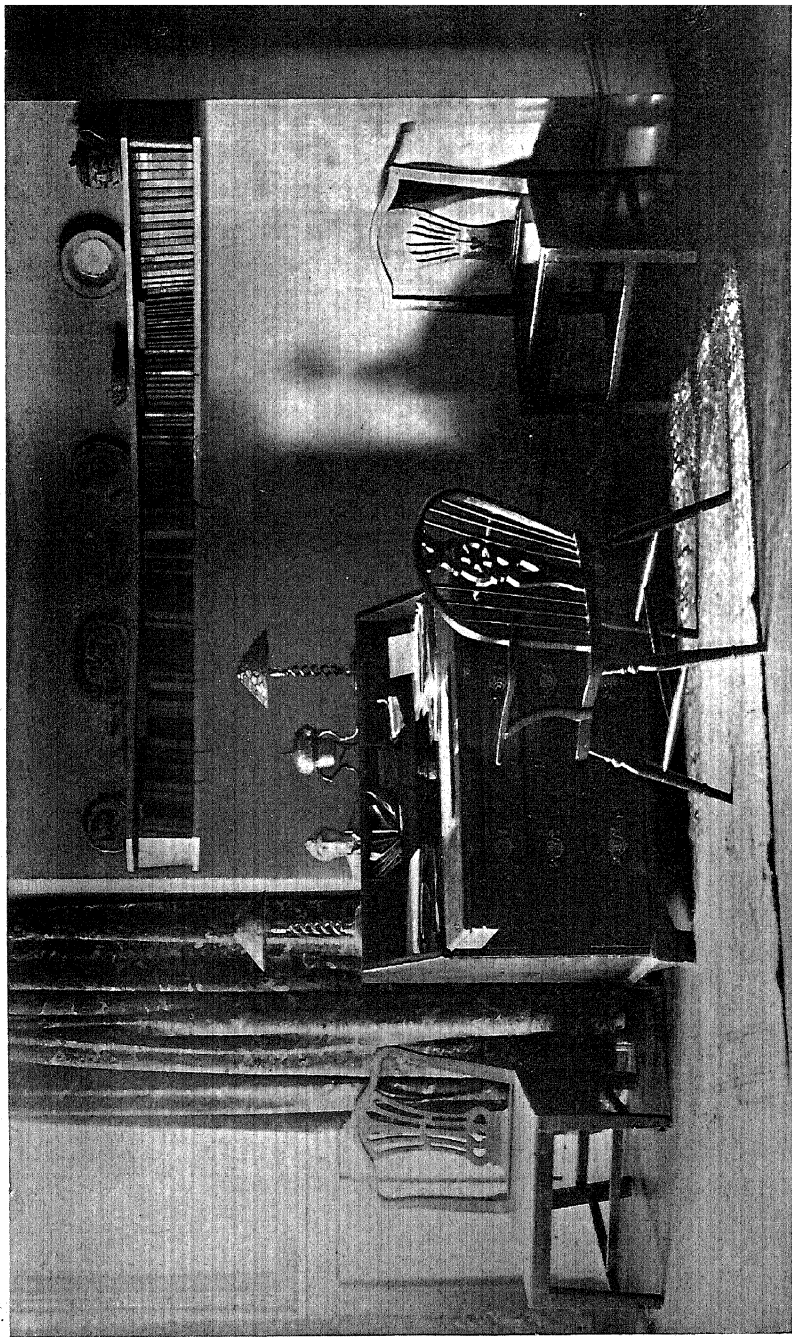
It is useful to have a bookshelf close to hand when one is writing. Such a shelf can be contrived in a variety of ways. A compact arrangement is shown by the illustration on page 143. Here the shelf is fixed in an angle of the room, and it will be noticed that there are no brackets showing. In this particular case the shelves were fixed in position by having spikes let into them at the back, and driven into the wall, but it would be simpler to have plain angle brackets screwed on to the inner side of the shelves (preferably let in flush) and nailed to the wall.

Sometimes there is an unused door centrally placed in a wall dividing two rooms. This can be entirely covered with a piece of fabric, which may be not only of interest in itself, but will form an effective background for a writing-table or other small piece of furniture. The covering-up of the unused doorway in this way also has the merit of giving the room a greater sense of seclusion.

Of a more elaborate character, but not incurring a great deal of expense or alteration, are the two schemes shown on pages 144 and 145. Here a cupboard is formed in the wall between



A WRITING PLACE AND BOOKSHELVES CONTRIVED IN A WINDOW RECESS.

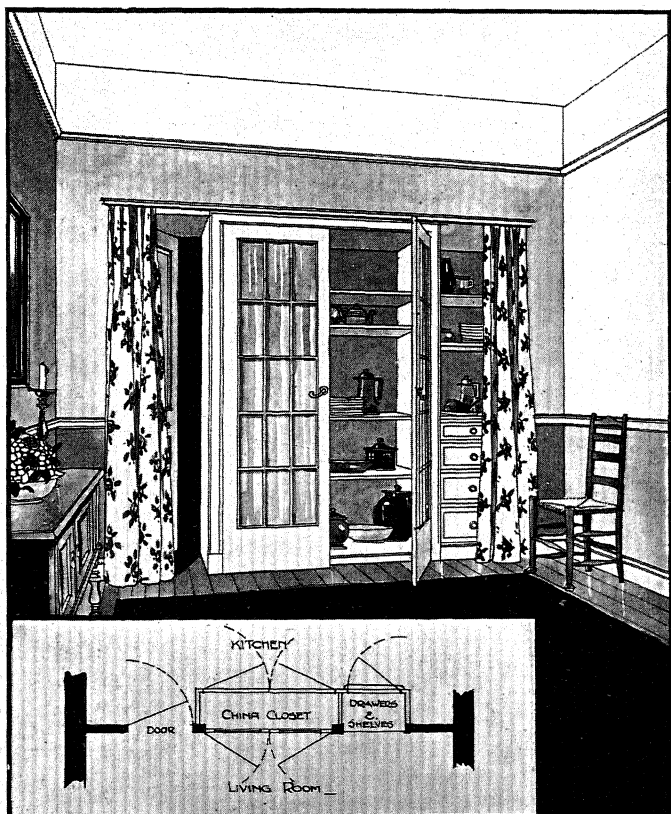


A WALL SHELF FOR BOOKS IN THE ANGLE OF A LIVING-ROOM.

So fixed as to do away with visible brackets.

living-room and kitchen, with a service hatch and ample drawer and shelf space, so that things can be stored ready to hand and be accessible from either room.

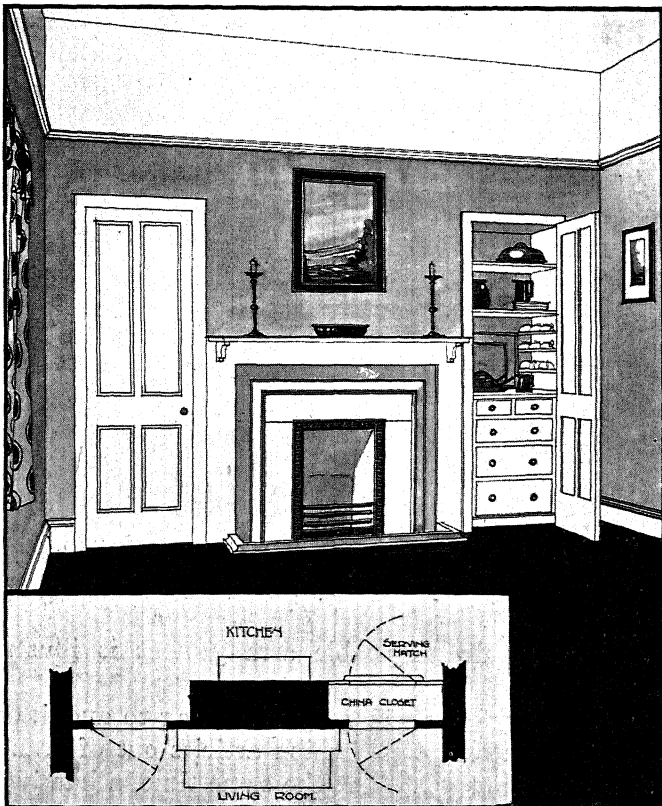
The telephone provides a problem to those who wish to have nothing that disturbs the decorative effect of a room, and as the design of the instrument is purely mechanical, there is occasion to disguise it in some manner. One of the most satisfactory methods is to use a box, which can be painted, covered with a fabric, or otherwise decoratively treated. Or the telephone



SERVICE CUPBOARDS BETWEEN LIVING-ROOM AND KITCHEN.

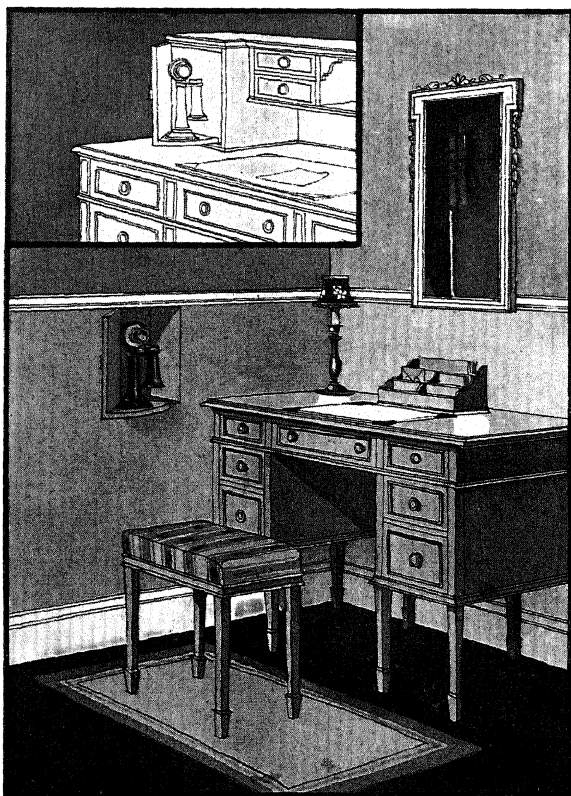
When the central doors are closed and the curtains are drawn on either side, the service arrangement is completely hidden.

may be contrived in a wall recess, as shown in the illustration on the next page, where also an alternative method is indicated—namely, a cupboard forming part of a writing-desk. In both these cases the telephone is fitted on a shelf attached to the hinged door. When the door is opened the instrument is thus fully accessible, and when the door is shut there is no indication of its existence. An arrangement of this kind is very adaptable to an entrance hall—itself a most convenient place for the telephone.



ANOTHER SCHEME FOR A SERVICE HATCH AND CUPBOARD.

Here the service hatch is arranged within the china cupboard on the right, a corresponding space on the left being occupied by a door.



HOW THE TELEPHONE CAN BE ACCOMMODATED.

Ready to hand, yet out of sight.

An economical dressing-table arrangement is illustrated on the opposite page.

Home-made furniture generally is a thing to avoid, especially when there is an attempt to fashion articles out of orange boxes and similar crude material. At the same time, a handyman prepared for a reasonable outlay in procuring sound wood can achieve something worth having. The dressing-table shown consists simply of two wooden pedestals with a top across, while on the wall behind is a mirror hung by tassel cords from hooks on the picture-rail. A rod runs under the front of the table top, and on

this a length of cretonne is hung at each side. The top itself could be painted, or stained and polished, covered with a linen strip, or finished in any other way that appealed to individual fancy.

The existence of an unsightly fireplace in an otherwise pleasing room is one of the minor problems in house furnishing. Usually the offending grate cannot be removed, on grounds of expense, or for some other reason, yet it is imperative to do something with it. Tiles of a garish kind are likely to be the main offence. Having been fixed in from the back, when the grate was set in position, they cannot be taken out from the front; so they must remain.



AN ECONOMICAL SCHEME FOR A DRESSING-TABLE.

It is possible to paint them a colour that suits the scheme of the room, and ordinary oil paint can be used for the purpose. If, however, the tiles have a pattern in high relief, it will not be obliterated by any painting. The only alternative is to cut a piece of sheet iron or copper to fill the entire side panels of the grate. It can either be cut slightly larger than the opening, and sprung into position (and an old table knife is a great aid in doing this), or it can be cut to the exact size of the opening and fixed in place by small screws passing into pegs driven in between the tiles.

Marble mantelpieces that are considered displeasing can also be painted. They should first be rubbed down with pumice powder, then given a coat of flat paint, then a finishing coat of enamel.

The problem of furnishing the bed-sitting-room has been dealt with elsewhere in this book, but here a suggestion may be made

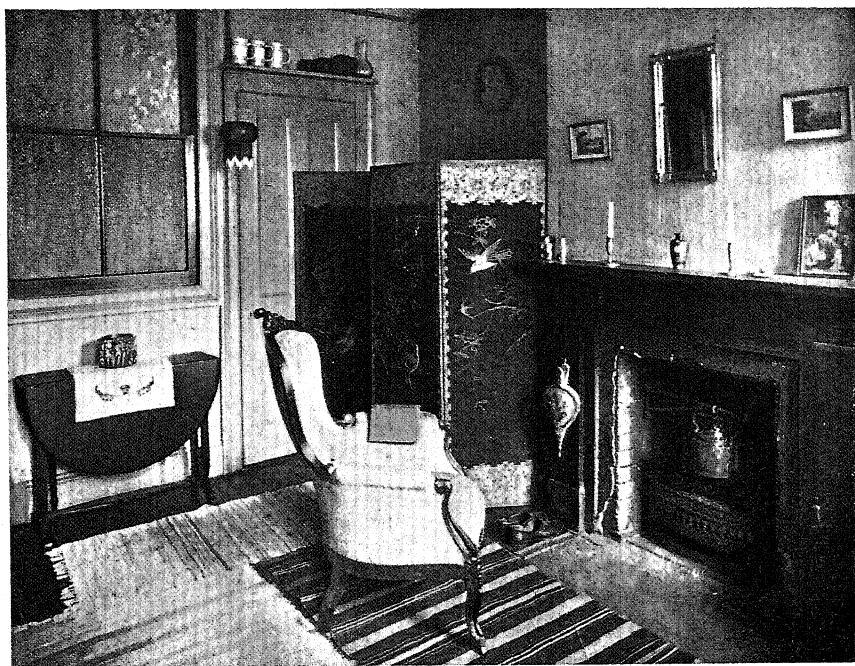


A LIVING-ROOM KITCHEN.

When cooking has to be done.

for another room of dual character—a living-room kitchen. The accompanying illustrations show what may be done in the way of camouflage.

The pictures are to a large extent self-explanatory, but one or two points may be specially noted. The gas cooker, quite clearly, is not in an ideal position; it is not well lighted, and is too close to the store cupboard; but nothing else was possible in this room, which is in an old house. Cupboard accommodation was extremely limited, and the ingenious arrangement was therefore adopted of making a shallow cupboard on the outside of the window on the left-hand side. This is not an outside window, but opened like a hatch into another room. The glass was made opaque, treated decoratively with paint, and in this way additional storage space was provided. There is no suggestion of a cupboard when



A LIVING-ROOM KITCHEN.

When work is over.

the lower sash is down ; while all trace of the gas-stove and the pot-stand next to it disappears when the four-fold screen is in position.

These are just a few of the many ways in which odd rooms, waste corners, and incidental features of the house can be dealt with.



A HOT AND COLD WATER FITMENT IN A BEDROOM.

A most convenient provision in place of the customary washstand.

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